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TORONTO



(M 595)

I. REMAINS OF HADRIAN'S WALL, NEAR HOUSES' TEADS

A BRIEF SURVEY OF
BRITISH HISTORY

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PREFACE

A Brief Survey of British History was first published in 1899, when at Harrow George Townsend Warner had already gained a reputation as a most original and stimulating teacher of History. His experience as a school-master had confirmed him in the belief, now unfashionable, that the ordinary boy was not incapable of rational thought, that, in fact, he would not be content unless he knew the "why", as well as the "how", "when", and "where", of events in History. "I have aimed," he said in his Preface, "at making a simple selection of the most important factors . . . and have treated them in more detail, to the exclusion of others which seemed to me less characteristic. . . . The value of History as an educational subject, even for the young, cannot, I think, be fully realized, unless some stress is placed on the sequence of cause and effect. . . . Young minds are by nature curious, and are receptive enough of an explanation, provided it be simple." "Events in History," he concluded, must be "presented, not as isolated, but as the causes or consequences of other events. It is this object that I have tried to keep before me."

Of his success there can be no question. When he died, at the age of fifty-one, in September, 1916, a writer in *History* said: "His essays and verse will be familiar to some of our readers, his excellent school-books to all."

Familiar the *Brief Survey* certainly has been since that time to generation after generation of young readers. To the older reader Townsend Warner's buoyant nineteenth-century optimism seems to date; his brave

declaration as he contemplates the Empire—"What we have, we hold"—rings strangely on disillusioned ears. Still, beyond amplifying one or two over-simplifications, restricting one or two sweeping generalizations that have swept a little too far, and correcting a few obvious errors, the present Editor has judged it wise to leave the greater part of the book—Chapters II to XXXI, and Chapter XXXV—as it stood after the last revision in 1938. He has, however, rewritten the whole of Chapter I, covering the period between the Roman Occupation and the Norman Conquest, and has added ten completely new chapters, covering the period from the beginning of the Industrial Revolution to the outbreak of the Second World War.

R. L. MACKIE.

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CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNINGS. ROMAN BRITAIN. THE ENGLISH INVASIONS

The history of Britain, so far as it is written, begins with the invasions by the Romans under Julius Cæsar, in 55 and 54 B.C. There is little in the way of written records of our country before this time, but learned men, from their study of old place names, and their exploration of the sites of ancient settlements and examination of the objects which they have dug up there, are now able to tell us a great deal about the people who were living here when the Romans came. The place names tell us that they spoke a Celtic language—British, the parent of modern Welsh—and that some of them, at least, were akin to the Gauls and Belgians who lived on the other side of the Channel. They were skilled in many industrial arts, such as weaving and dyeing; they made tools and weapons of bronze and iron, struck gold coins, and fashioned brooches and other ornaments, which they decorated with enamel of various colours. They did not have weapons sharp enough, however, to hack down the dense forests which covered the plains, or ploughs strong enough to break up the heavy alluvial soil by the rivers; in consequence they made their settlements on the higher slopes and summits of the hills. They did not keep written records, but depended on their bards to memorize and recount the great doings of chieftains and tribes.

We may dismiss the Roman Occupation of Britain very briefly, for most of what the Romans did was forgotten soon after it ended. After Julius Cæsar's second expedition, almost a hundred years passed before the Emperor

Celtic
Britain.

Roman
Occupation of
Britain,
43-410.

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NOTES ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS

I. Hadrian's Wall (*frontispiece*).

The wall was built—of stone—by order of the Emperor Hadrian about A.D. 122, was wrecked towards the end of the second century, rebuilt by the Emperor Septimius Severus between 208 and 211, and finally abandoned in the second half of the fourth century. It was planned, not as a wall of defence, but as a raised patrol walk, linking up a series of large forts, placed at intervals of four miles, and small defensive posts, or milecastles. The illustration shows an unspoiled section of the Wall, complete except for the stone parapet, a little to the west of the great fort of Borcovicium or Housesteads.

[PHOTOGRAPH: J. P. GIBSON]

II. The Battle of Hastings: Death of King Harold (*page 15*).

From the Bayeux Tapestry, embroidered soon after the Conquest, probably in England, and preserved in Bayeux ever since. The Latin words "*Hic Harold Rex interfectus est*"—"Here King Harold was killed"—indicate the subject. Harold and his followers, like their Norman opponents, are shown wearing hauberks of ring-mail, and conical iron helmets, with nose-pieces to protect the face. On Harold's right is his standard-bearer, holding aloft the dragon flag of Wessex—the standard of the ancient British kings. The narrow frieze underneath shows the ugly side of "a famous victory"—plunderers after the battle stripping the dead of their arms and armour.

[CROWN COPYRIGHT]

III. The Siege of a Thirteenth-Century Fortress (*page 30*).

From Viollet le Duc's *Dictionnaire de l'Architecture Militaire*. The besiegers have no siege guns, only giant catapults like the *trébuchet* (A) and primitive wooden tanks like the "Cat" or "Sow" with its iron snout (B), and the "Belfry" (C), which were pushed about on rollers. When the Belfry has been pushed up close to the wall of the fortress, the gangway on the summit will be lowered, and a storming party rush across to the parapet. The fortress is protected by the usual moat, high curtain walls of stone, and cylindrical or square

flanking towers. Projecting wooden galleries or "hourds" have been fixed to the towers and curtain wall to give the defending archers a greater "field of fire".

[FROM A COPY IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM]

IV. Agriculture in the Fourteenth Century (*page 63*).

From the Luttrell Psalter. This illustration is one of the many little coloured pictures with which an unknown East Anglian scribe embellished a copy of the Psalter which he made about the middle of the fourteenth century. It shows a four-ox plough-team dragging a wooden plough shod with iron, which, as can be seen, cuts only a shallow furrow.

[BRITISH MUSEUM COPYRIGHT]

V. Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire (*page 78*).

An air view from the north-west. Fountains Abbey was founded in 1132 by a colony of monks of the Cistercian Order, and was completed, except for Abbot Huby's Tower, about the middle of the thirteenth century. The illustration shows the normal arrangement of the buildings of a great medieval monastery—the church on the north of the square cloister garth, with its surrounding cloister or covered walk, the chapterhouse and the dormitory on the east, the refectory and the kitchen on the south side, and on the west the long building that housed the *Conversi* or lay-brethren. West of this group of buildings are the foundations of the guest-houses, and east of it the foundations of the infirmary.

[PHOTOGRAPH: AEROFILMS]

VI. The Spanish Armada in the Channel (*page 111*).

From a drawing of the tapestry, now destroyed, that hung in the old House of Lords. The Spanish ships, including two large galleys propelled by oar and sail, are on the left. In the centre, English ships are engaging Spanish ships, firing broadsides into the hulls of their high-built opponents.

[PHOTOGRAPH: MANSELL]

VII. The House of Lords in the Sixteenth Century (*page 126*).

Reproduction of engraving taken from a painted print in the Cottonian Library (British Museum). Queen Elizabeth is shown enthroned, in her robes of state, bearing her crown, orb, and sceptre. To right and to the left of her stand the Lord Chancellor and the Lord High Treasurer. In front of the throne, as in the present House of Lords, is the Woolsack,

the Lord Chancellor's seat. In the foreground two members of the House of Commons, who are accompanied by other knights of the shire and borough representatives, present the Speaker to the Queen.

VIII. Charles I (*page 143*).

From the painting by Sir Anthony Vandyke and Sir Peter Lely. Charles Stewart, second son of King James VI and I, b. Dunfermline, 1600; created Prince of Wales, 1616; King, 1625; executed at Whitehall in London, 30th January, 1649.

VIII. Oliver Cromwell (*page 143*).

From a copy in the National Portrait Gallery, London, of a painting made about 1657 by Samuel Cooper. Oliver Cromwell, b. 1599; educated at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge; entered Parliament, 1628; Lieutenant-General of the Parliamentary Army, 1644; Protector, 1653; d. 3rd September, 1658.

IX. The Old House of Commons (*page 158*).

From a coloured print by Pugin and Rowlandson in Ackermann's *Microcosm of London*, 1808. Originally St. Stephen's Chapel (fourteenth century); first occupied by the Commons in the sixteenth century; interior remodelled by Sir Christopher Wren. Both Houses of Parliament completely destroyed by fire, 1834. In the centre is the Speaker, in full-bottomed white wig, in his chair; before him, on the clerks' table, lies the Mace. The member addressing the House is probably William Pitt.

[BRITISH MUSEUM COPYRIGHT]

X. Nelson's "Victory" (*page 175*).

A line-of-battle ship, mounting 90 guns, launched in 1765, but not commissioned until 1778; masts shortened and other alterations carried out in the later nineteenth century; now carefully restored to look exactly as it did in 1805. With its great spread of canvas it must have been a majestic and beautiful object, a

"splendid ship, its white sails crowding,
Leaning across the bosom of the urgent West".

It now rests permanently in dry dock at Portsmouth.

[PHOTOGRAPH: STEPHEN CRIBB]

XI. Opening of the Glasgow and Garnkirk Railway in 1831 (*page 190*).

The first railway in Scotland was the Monkland and Kirkin-tilloch Railway, opened in 1826. The Glasgow and Garnkirk Railway, however, was the first railway expressly designed to compete with the more slowly moving canal traffic. The beflagged train shown in the picture is driven by George Stephenson.

[PHOTOGRAPH: ANNAN]

XII. Power-loom Weaving (*page 207*).

From Baines' *History of the Cotton Manufacture in Great Britain*, 1836.

XIII. William Ewart Gladstone (*page 222*).

Born 1809 in Liverpool, of Scottish parents; educated Eton and Oxford; entered Parliament, 1832; Prime Minister, 1868-74, 1880-85, 1886, and 1892-94; d. 1898.

XIII. Benjamin Disraeli (*page 222*).

Born 1804 in London, of Jewish parents; privately educated; entered Parliament, 1837; published *Sybil*, 1845; Prime Minister, 1868, 1874-80; created Earl of Beaconsfield, 1876; d. 1881.

[PHOTOGRAPH: DOWNEY]

XIV. The House of Commons (*page 239*).

First used 1852; destroyed by enemy action, 1941. The Clerks' Table separates the supporters of the Government, on the Speaker's right, from the supporters of the Opposition. The Prime Minister and the other Cabinet Ministers sit on the Front Government Bench, above the Gangway; the Leader of the Opposition and his principal supporters, including former Cabinet Ministers, on the Front Opposition Bench. Above the Speaker's Chair is the Press Gallery.

[PHOTOGRAPH: WALTER SCOTT]

XV. Winston Spencer Churchill (*page 254*).

From a photograph taken about 1914. Born 1874; educated Harrow and Sandhurst; entered Parliament, 1901; entered Cabinet, 1905; held many Cabinet posts, including that of First Lord of the Admiralty, 1911-15 and 1939-40; Prime Minister, 1940-45.

[PHOTOGRAPH: ELLIOTT AND FRY]

XV. David Lloyd George (*page 254*).

From a photograph taken about 1914. Born 1863 in Manchester, of Welsh parents; educated privately; entered Parliament, 1890; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1908-15; Prime Minister, 1916-22; created Earl, 1945; died 1946.

[PHOTOGRAPH: VANDYK]

XVI. The First World War: Canadian Soldiers in the Front Line (*page 270*).

From a photograph take in 1915. The infantrymen here are posted, not in the usual narrow fire trench, which often could not be dug in the swampy soil of Flanders, but behind a sand-bag parapet. Their feet rest on "duckboards", laid down to allow the troops to move about the water-logged ground. The second soldier from the right is examining the enemy's line through a periscope. The troops have just been issued with "tin hats"—the familiar steel helmets; they have not yet been issued with gas masks, and therefore have no protection against the poison gas which the Germans are soon to use.

[PHOTOGRAPH: CENTRAL NEWS]

CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNINGS. ROMAN BRITAIN. THE ENGLISH INVASIONS

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Claudius led the legions back to Britain in A.D. 43. The Britons could not resist them. Piece by piece, the Romans subdued the southern half of the island, although one British revolt, led by Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni, nearly destroyed the Roman power. It was put down and the Queen poisoned herself, but not before the three chief Roman towns, Colchester, St. Albans, and London, had been sacked and burned.

Though the Romans twice penetrated into the wild country beyond the Firth of Tay, though they built stone-walled forts like Trimontium, and in A.D. 142 constructed the Antonine Wall, a great earthen rampart between the Forth and Clyde, in 183 they gave up the attempt to occupy and Romanize the regions north of the Solway and Tyne. Hence Hadrian's Wall, the wall of stone which had been built by order of the Emperor Hadrian sixty years earlier, became the northern boundary of Roman Britain.

During the Roman occupation of three and a half centuries the people of South Britain came to regard their country as part of the Roman Empire, and themselves as Romans. They dressed like Romans, spoke Latin like Romans, lived, many of them, in towns modelled after the smaller cities in Italy or southern Gaul, raised altars to Jupiter and Mars, and the other gods of the Romans, and when Rome became Christian at the beginning of the fourth century, some of them at least, left the heathen temples to worship in little Christian churches. So in the south the Romano-British civilians traded and tilled the soil undisturbed from generation to generation, while in the west, at Caerleon and Chester, and in the north, at York and on the Wall, the Roman regular troops stood on guard.

In the second half of the fourth century, however, Picts from Scotland, Scots from Ireland, and Saxons

The English Invasions. from the lands by the mouth of the Elbe, broke through the defences and plundered the province from end to end. They were driven out, but the warning was neglected. Twice, about the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the fifth, an ambitious Roman general withdrew the best of the Roman regular troops to the continent in a vain attempt to make himself Emperor. They never returned. No reinforcements were sent to take their places. When in 446 the Romano-British leaders appealed to Rome for help against the renewed invasion from overseas, their request went unheeded. They knew that they must now stand up alone against the barbarian onslaughts. One of them, Vortigern, was foolish enough to enlist among his warriors a band of Saxons commanded by two chieftains, Hengist and Horsa. Horsa was killed in battle just after their arrival in 449, but Hengist, after fighting for Vortigern, rebelled against him and made himself master of Kent. He was followed by other leaders and other bands, some being Jutes from the mouths of the Rhine, others Saxons from Holstein, and others Angles from Jutland. They were all similar peoples, who spoke what has turned by degrees into our own tongue—English.

They were fierce warriors, they worshipped heathen gods, they feared the walled-in, stone-built towns, and hated the people who lived in them. We read of the Saxon chiefs who stormed the fortress of Anderida in 491: "Ælle and Cissa beset Anderida, and slew all that were therein; nor was there afterwards one Briton left." But the Britons put up a stout resistance to the invaders, and a year or two later, at Mount Badon, inflicted such a crushing defeat on them that the island had peace for another half century. The name of the victorious leader was Arthur—the King Arthur of many a tale and poem as yet unwritten.

It was not till the second half of the sixth century that the English, as we may now call them, resumed their westward advance. A great victory at Deorham, in Gloucestershire, in 577, let Ceawlin, King of the West Saxons, reach the Severn, and another at Chester, in 613, extended the power of Ethelfrith, King of Northumbria, to the western sea. Henceforward the Britons were split into three separate parts, dwelling in Cornwall, Wales, and Strathclyde, the last being most of the region in north-western England and south-western Scotland between the Ribble and the Clyde.

So far we have looked on the English as a wild, warlike race, but these wild, warlike men are, like the Britons, our own ancestors, and from them we have inherited many things. One we have mentioned already—our language. But there is more than that. These barbarians brought with them some of the institutions under which our country is governed to-day.

Character
of the
English
Invaders.

The first thing to remark is that the individual Englishman thought much of his freedom. He was master of the land which he and his family cultivated, whether it was a lonely clearing in a forest or a portion of the two or three great open fields surrounding a village. If he lived in a village, he and his neighbours would meet from time to time to settle disputes, and to discuss how they could help one another in the cultivation of their land. They might discuss, for example, how they could make up an ox team sufficient to drag the heavy new ploughs. But though he was free, the Englishman of these days was not a law unto himself: he was responsible for the good behaviour of his kinsfolk, just as they, in their turn, were responsible for his. If any of them killed a man, he had to contribute to the fine of two hundred shillings imposed on the slayer. Similarly, if he were the victim, his family would receive two hundred shillings as com-

pensation from the criminal and his kinsfolk. It does not follow, however, that every man in England was a free-man: not only the vanquished Britons, but Englishmen captured in the wars between one petty English kingdom and another, were treated as slaves.

Even the most independent of these ceorls or peasants looked on his king as belonging to a race apart, as a descendant of the ancient gods. It is true that he was elected by the Council of the kingdom, but the Council could not elect anyone; its choice was limited to the sons or other near kinsmen of the late king. In the king's hall were his *gesiths* or companions, pledged to defend him with their lives, and to avenge him should he be slain. In return for their service these nobles received grants of land from the king, as well as the knowledge that their lives were reckoned to be six times as valuable as the life of an ordinary freeman.

Old
English
Institu-
tions.

When the first small kingdoms in England were changed into shires, the affairs of each shire were regulated by a shire moot, or court, presided over by one of the king's nobles, an ealdorman, or an earl, as he was called later, and a bishop. These assemblies not only settled local disputes, they were also courts of justice, at which the oath of twelve of the kinsmen of the accused was accepted as a proof of innocence. Below the shire moots were the hundred moots and township moots, for the smaller divisions called hundreds and townships.

With the unification of Anglo-Saxon England we see something like a Parliament taking shape - a Witenagemot, or Great Council, presided over by the king, and attended by the ealdormen, the thegns, as the nobles were now called, the two archbishops, the bishops, and certain of the abbots. It differed indeed from the Parliament of later mediæval times, for it contained no representatives of the ordinary freeman, but it wielded many of the

powers that Parliament wields now. It could not depose a king, or reverse a policy which he wanted to carry out, but it could, in exceptional circumstances, elect a king. It could make laws, too, and the king was usually careful to ask its advice about affairs of state, questions of peace and war, of treaties, and of religion.

CHAPTER 2

THE COMING OF CHRISTIANITY

The English invasion seemed a change for the worse. Under Roman rule the Britons had been united, civilized, and Christian. The invaders divided the country afresh, and brought with them wars and violence; they allowed towns to go into decay; they were heathens, worshipping Woden and Thunor. Under them Britain was for a time lost to Europe. It had been a prosperous Roman province, but ruin came over it. Rome, however, was to conquer it afresh; this time the conquest was not to be made by Roman legions for the Emperor, but by Roman missionaries for the Church.

Heathen-
ism
returns.

It happened that Æthelberht, King of Kent, married Bertha, a Christian princess from France. The Pope at this time, Gregory the Great, saw that this offered a chance of converting the heathen. Everyone knows the familiar story, how, passing through the slave-market at Rome, he had seen some fair-haired slaves standing there; he asked whence they came, and was told they were Angles—"Not Angles but Angels" was his answer. "And who is their king?" "Ælle," was the reply. "Alleluia shall be sung in the realm of Ælle," said Gregory. When he became Pope he made up his mind

The Mission of Augustine, 597. to keep the promise so quaintly uttered. So he sent Augustine and a band of forty missionaries to Britain. In 597 they landed at Ebbsfleet, the very place where Hengist and his Saxons had landed a hundred and fifty years before.

King Æthelberht was soon converted, and his subjects followed his example, so that Kent was the first English kingdom to become Christian. Then, just as a Frankish princess had given the chance of sending a mission to Kent, so a Kentish princess, Æthelberg, who married Edwin, King of Northumbria, carried another missionary, Paulinus, to the north, but his Northumbrian converts lapsed into heathenism when their king was slain in battle. The last great stand for heathendom was made by Penda, King of Mercia, but after thirteen years of fighting he was killed in battle, and soon after his death his subjects also became Christians.

The Mission of Columba, 563. Meanwhile the Roman monks were not the only missionaries at work. As early as 432 St. Patrick, a Briton, had crossed to Ireland and converted the Irish to Christianity. From Ireland, Christianity was brought back to Scotland in 563, when St. Columba founded a monastery on the island of Iona. Sometimes alone, sometimes with a band of followers as enthusiastic as himself, he travelled through wolf-haunted forests or over lonely moorlands, till in 597, the year of his death and of St. Augustine's arrival, monasteries like the mother-house on Iona were to be found in the remotest parts of Scotland. In 634, at the request of King Oswald of Northumbria, St. Aidan, a Scot, came from Iona and set up a monastery on the island of Lindisfarne, from which he and his monks sallied forth to win the Northumbrians back to Christianity.

Unfortunately, though the Celtic and Roman missionaries were striving for the same good object, they

could not quite agree. The Celtic Church, because of its isolation, was out of touch with Rome, and differed from Roman practice in some points, such as the date of the celebration of Easter. In 664 a synod was held at Whitby to consider the matter. Colman, the Scottish Bishop of Lindisfarne, supported the practice which his church had received from St. Columba, its founder; Wilfrid, the abbot of Ripon, took the Roman side. Oswiu, the king, asked Colman if the keys of heaven had been given to Columba, as they had been given to Peter. Colman replied, "No." "Then," said the king, "if Peter is the door-keeper I will never contradict him, lest, when I come to the gates, there should be none to open them"—and so he decided for the Roman practice. His decision was important. Had he decided the other way it would have cut Britain off from joining with the rest of Europe in matters of religion, and might have left it ignorant of the developments in art and learning on the Continent.

Synod of
Whitby,
664.

The Church was now one in practice and belief, but it was not united or organized. As the country was divided into several kingdoms men did not speak of one church, but of many. The work of uniting all churchmen under one church and one head was done by a Greek monk, Theodore of Tarsus, who was chosen by the Pope to be Archbishop of Canterbury. He divided the land into dioceses, or districts, gave each bishop his own diocese to manage, and held national synods in which all who came thought of themselves no longer as men of Northumbria, Kent, or Wessex, but as members of one united church.

The
Church
United and
Organized
by Theo-
dore, 669.

If we look for the results of the conversion upon our country, the first is here. A united church gave the example for a united people; union under one archbishop—there was no Archbishop of York till 735—

A National
Church an
Example of
a United
Nation.

accustomed men to think of union under one king; if they were alike in religion, they might well be alike in law and government. And we shall see that this soon came to pass; the old petty kingdoms died out or were absorbed, until one kingdom—that of Wessex—became the kingdom of England.

Peace and Morality. The Church offered an example of union; it also offered an example of peace. Among the Saxons men had been chiefly admired for their valour. Theirs was the rule of might; little was thought of right. Even murder might be atoned for by payment of a fine. But the monks and parish priests lived peaceful lives: they taught that doing one's duty at home was better than seeking adventures abroad; that it was better to forgive an enemy than to overcome him; that a man should strive to be loved rather than feared.

The Church and Learning; Caedmon, 664. To the Church, too, we owe the beginnings of our learning. The Abbey of Whitby found shelter for a cowherd who had become a monk. This man was Caedmon, the first English poet. His great religious poem seemed to those of his time to be sent direct from heaven. "Others after him strove to compose religious poems, but none could vie with him, for he learnt not the art of poetry from men, or of men, but from God." **Bede, 673-735.** the "Venerable Bede" is the respectful title that has been bestowed on him—another monk, is a type of the great teachers whom the Church gave us. "My constant pleasure," he says, "lay in learning, or teaching, or writing." At his school of Jarrow six hundred monks learned from him. He was our first historian; and, indeed, it is he who tells us almost all we know of this time. And yet more than this, he translated into English St. John's Gospel, devoting the last days of his life to the task. He was urged to rest from the work that was killing him, but he refused, saying, "I don't want my boys to

read a lie, or to work to no purpose when I am gone." When the last chapter of the Gospel was finished the great scholar died.

Another, and a very different type, from among the men the Church gave us was Dunstan. He, too, was a monk, but while Bede was a scholar, Dunstan was not only a scholar but a statesman also. He was the adviser of two kings, and practically regent for a third; he went with the king on campaigns against the Danes; he kept the royal treasure. As in addition he was Archbishop of Canterbury, we can understand that he was much the most powerful man in the kingdom. He was the first man to be great both as a cleric and as a statesman. But there were many who followed in his steps. In fact, until the reign of Henry VIII the greatest ministers of our kings were almost always clerics. They were far more able and enlightened than the ignorant warriors and nobles who formed the king's court, and they did a great work for England. As we shall see later, one of these church-statesmen, Stephen Langton, had much to do with obtaining for us our Magna Carta.

Statesmen;
Dunstan,
Archbishop
of Canter-
bury, 960-
988.

The Church, then, gave us the beginnings of our national unity; she did much to give us peace at home and a better sense of what was lawful and right; she gave us scholars and she gave us statesmen.

CHAPTER 3

THE UNION OF ENGLAND UNDER THE
KINGS OF WESSEX. ALFRED AND THE DANES

Rise of Wessex. Out of the number of little kingdoms which existed at first in England, it happened that now one and then another grew more powerful than its neighbours, and held a vague kind of sway over the rest. First of all Northumbria obtained such a position, and afterwards Mercia. When this was so, the King of Northumbria or Mercia was called a Bretwalda, or overlord. Thus King Edwin of Northumbria (616-632) and King Offa of Mercia (d. 796) were called Bretwaldas. In the year 802, however, a new kingdom rose to the chief power. This was Wessex. Egbert, its king, first subdued Kent and Sussex, and thus made himself master of England south of the Thames; then in 829 he attacked and defeated the Mercians, and forced them to become his subjects. In the same year Northumbria submitted to him also.

Thus under Egbert England was united. With him begins the history of our kings, for with five exceptions¹ every king who has sat on the throne of England till the present day has had Egbert's blood in his veins. So the overlordship of Wessex is of far greater interest in our history than that of any other kingdom which came before it.

It is likely, however, that Wessex might have risen only to fall again, like Northumbria and Mercia, but for an event which forced the necessity of union upon all England. This event is the coming of the Danes.

¹ The exceptions are Canute, Hardecnute, the two Harolds, and William I.

The Danish invasion was much like the invasion of the English themselves, and the new-comers inflicted on the English almost the same evils that the English had inflicted on the Britons. At first the Danes were mere plunderers, landing from their ships, sacking monasteries and burning towns. At the approach of an enemy they embarked again and made off with their spoil. By degrees they grew bolder; they came in greater numbers, and ventured farther inland; they even began to settle in the country, and so successful were they that by 869 they had subdued Northumbria and East Anglia, and seemed likely to become masters of the whole country. The kingdom of Wessex alone was left to resist them. Fortunately at this time there appeared an English hero-king who was equal to the task.

Danish
Inroads
begun, 787.

This was Alfred, grandson of Egbert. Even before he became king, while yet a boy of eighteen, he had helped his brother, King Æthelred, in a year's hard fighting against the Danes, which ended in the men of Wessex routing them at Ashdown in 870. In this battle Alfred was held to have won the chief honours by his dash and skill.

Alfred,
871-899.

The Danes were driven back for the time, but they were not conquered. Early in Alfred's reign a great host of them under Guthrum poured into Wessex. They took London and Winchester, and defeated Alfred again and again, till he was forced to flee to a refuge among the marshes of Somerset, called the Isle of Athelney. But though all seemed lost, Alfred did not despair. In 878 he gathered the men of Devon and Somerset, and, marching against Guthrum, defeated him at Edington, drove his army back to its camp at Chippingham, and blockaded it there. Guthrum, afraid that Alfred would starve him out, consented to withdraw his army from Wessex and to become a Christian. In 886 Alfred captured and garri-



ENGLAND IN THE TIME OF KING ALFRED



II. THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS: DEATH OF KING HAROLD

(See Note on p. xiii)

soned London, which had surrendered to the Danes, and so made himself responsible for a city that lay outside his own kingdom of Wessex. It was an action which brought hope to many an Englishman living outside the frontiers of Wessex: in the same year the people in those regions which were not yet under direct Danish rule agreed to accept Alfred as their lord. He was not accepted reluctantly, as Edwin and Offa had been; he was accepted because men felt that he was fighting for the sake, not of Wessex alone, but of the whole English people.

He was now able to make a definite treaty with Guthrum. It divided England into two parts by a line drawn, roughly speaking, from Chester to London. South and west of this Alfred ruled; the north and east remained to Guthrum and the Danes. More than once in his reign Alfred had to take up arms afresh against hordes of invaders, but he always overcame them. A Norse poet sang—

“ They got hard blows instead of shillings,
And the axe’s weight instead of tribute.”

So they began to think that Alfred was best left alone.

Alfred showed that he was a bold warrior by overcoming the Danes; he also showed that he was a wise statesman by not trying to do too much. He saved Wessex; and though he had for a time to give up the north and east, it was only for a time. His sons and grandsons were destined to recover all that had been lost. Had Alfred done no more than to save the English from being overthrown altogether, we should remember him as one of the greatest of our kings. But he did many other things besides overcoming the Danes.

Alfred a
Statesman.

To-day we think of the British navy as the chief among our many national glories, so we should remember the part played by Alfred in naval history. Although the

Alfred and
the Navy.

English had been great sailors before they came to Britain, yet when they came they lost their love for the sea. But Alfred saw that the best way to keep off the Danes was by fighting them at sea, and so he built ships bigger and faster than the Danish ships, took into his service Frisian, Welsh, and even Danish sailors to teach his men, and at last was able to guard the shores of England more or less effectually from foreign invaders. He was the first to show what we all recognize now, that if Britain is not supreme at sea she cannot hope to be safe from invasion.

Alfred deserves to be remembered for what he did to keep his realm safe; yet no less honour is due for what he did to make it well-governed. He set in order the laws, and took such good care that they should be kept, that in later days, when troubles came again, men longed for the "laws of King Alfred". He was a scholar, and wished to teach his people. He desired that every freeborn youth "should abide at his book till he can well understand English writing". In order that they should have books to read, he himself translated books for them—books on religion, on geography, on history; and he caused to be written, and perhaps himself helped to write, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Thus, as Caedmon is the father of English poetry, Alfred is the father of English prose.

In 899 Alfred died, but his work did not die with him. His son, Edward the Elder, reconquered the Danelaw as far as the Humber. His grandsons, Athelstan, Edmund, and Eadred, restored the English power over Northumbria, and on at least two occasions entered into an alliance with the Scots. Thus England was again united under an English king. The Danes had been beaten; they had settled down quietly under English rule; they had intermarried with the English, though for many

Alfred as a
Lawgiver
and a
Teacher.

Alfred's
Sons and
Grandsons,
899-955.

years they kept their own distinctive speech and customs. All seemed well. It was hardly possible to imagine a better sign for the future than this, that Eadred, the youngest of Alfred's three grandsons, was chosen king by a Witan in which Englishmen, Welshmen, and Danes all sat peaceably side by side as members of one realm. But the Danish invasions were not yet over. Fresh troubles were not very far off.

CHAPTER 4

THE END OF ANGLO-SAXON ENGLAND. DANES AND NORMANS IN ENGLAND

Alfred himself stands out as the towering landmark of the period we have followed. But his greatness is apt to The Great Saxon Kings. mislead us. He does not stand alone. He is only one of a race of kings, all most capable rulers, who, were Alfred out of sight, might each deserve to be called a hero. It is not too much to say, that for nearly one hundred and eighty years (800-978) every king of the royal house of Wessex save one deserved to be called a great man; and, in addition, during the last forty years these kings had the advice of the greatest Saxon statesman—Dunstan. This is the Golden Age of Anglo-Saxon England; but the period which follows offers a sad contrast.

It opens ominously with murder. The young King Edward, riding past his stepmother's castle at Corfe, halted at the door and asked for a cup of wine. The Queen's retainers brought it to him with a show of respect, and while the king was drinking it, one of them stabbed him in the back, so that his mistress's own son Æthelred might get the throne. For eight-and-thirty

years England was to regret that deed, for Æthelred II's reign proved one of the worst in her history.

Æthelred's name of "Unraed"—that is to say, "No-Counsel"—aptly describes him. He was selfish, idle, weak. He allowed his nobles to quarrel among themselves. The Danes saw the weakness of the realm and began their raids afresh. Æthelred was foolish enough to reverse the plan which Alfred had followed with such success. Instead of hard blows he gave them shillings, and tried to buy them off with the Danegeld, a tax which he made his luckless subjects pay. This of course only attracted fresh swarms of Danes. One band followed another, all clamouring for Danegeld. Then Æthelred, having by his first act brought the Danes into England, made them lasting foes by his second. He had recourse to treachery. Suddenly, in a time of truce, he caused all the Danes on whom he could lay hands to be murdered. This "Massacre of St. Brice's Day" drew down on him the whole might of the Danish kingdom, for among the victims so foully slain were the sister of the Danish king, Sweyn, and her husband.

Æthelred, like all weak kings, was a prey to bad favourites. The man he chose as his friend was a prince of traitors—Eadric. Almost the first act of this friend was to betray his master by persuading the Witan to offer the throne of England to the Danish king. The people of London, however, stoutly held out for Æthelred, and when he died in 1016 they made Edmund, his son, king. He was young and brave, as his name "Ironside" tells us, and might have driven out Cnut, the younger son of King Sweyn, who now led the Danes. He won battle after battle, but Eadric, who had come over to his side, deserted him again on the battlefield and caused his defeat. Cnut, however, respected his doughty opponent and made a truce with him. But Edmund died before

the end of the year, and the nation had no choice but to accept Cnut, now King of Denmark by the death of his brother, as King of England as well.

Thus all Alfred's work was overthrown. Yet Cnut, though a foreign conqueror, was a good king. He ruled sternly, but fairly; he gave England the peace which was sadly needed. He married Æthelred's widow, the daughter of Duke Robert of Normandy, and so joined himself to the old royal family; though he preferred Danes, he did not exclude Englishmen from his service, and he had the treacherous Eadric slain without a trial. He felt so certain of the loyalty of his new subjects that he sent home the army and fleet with which he had conquered England. This shows us that he was respected, just as the old story of his rebuke to the flattering courtiers, who urged him to forbid the tide to come any farther, shows that he was wise. His pilgrimage to Rome as a penitent shows that the descendant of heathen kings had become a humble servant of the Church, and made it clear, too, that Cnut wanted to bring his kingdom, so long isolated, into contact with the civilization of Western Europe.

Cnut the
Dane,
1016-35.

Neither of Cnut's sons, Harold and Harthacnut, lived long, so that in 1042 the Witan had to choose a fresh king. The choice fell on Edward, second son of Æthelred II.

Edward, the Confessor, as he was called, though a pious, well-meaning man, was destined to bring England under another foreign power. He had been brought up in Normandy, and he was much fonder of Normans than of his own subjects. He made one Norman Archbishop of Canterbury, and promoted others to be bishops and earls; worse than this, he had even given some sort of promise to William, the Duke of Normandy, that he would leave him the crown of England at his death. All this favouring of foreigners made Englishmen very angry.

Edward,
the Con-
fessor,
1042-66.

When Edward died, leaving only a great-nephew of ten years old to follow him, the Witan, anxious for a strong ruler, and for one who would hate the Normans instead of favouring them, put Harold, son of Earl Godwine of Wessex, on the throne. But William of Normandy, as we have seen, had already been aiming at the crown. And further, unluckily for Harold, it had happened that he had once been wrecked on the coast of Normandy and thrown into prison. Before the duke would let him go, he had made him swear that he would do his best to get William chosen king on Edward's death. William now declared that Harold was false to his oath, and made ready an army of Normans to invade England and dethrone him.

Even at this fatal moment, while William was preparing his fleet and mustering thousands of soldiers, not from Normandy alone but from all parts of France, England was not united. Harold's brother, Tostig, whom he had driven into exile, suddenly landed in Northumbria, bringing with him the King of Norway and a host of Norse warriors. Harold had to march north to fight them. He met them at Stamford Bridge and utterly defeated them. Tostig and the Norwegian king were both slain. The vast army which came in three hundred ships was so shattered that twenty-four were enough to carry it away.

It was a great victory, but it was Harold's last. While he was away, the wind shifted from the north-west to the south, and Duke William was able to land with some six thousand mail-clad warriors at his back. "Had I been there," cried Harold, "they had never made good their landing." He hurried his army southward too quickly to allow Edwin and Morcar, Earls of Mercia and Northumbria, whom he had summoned to his aid, to overtake him with their armies.

The battle that was to decide England's fate was

fought near Hastings on the 14th October, 1066. Harold drew up his men on a hill. His soldiers fought on foot; his bodyguard in the centre were armed mostly with two-handed axes or long swords, but on the wings he had only hastily-raised levies, some armed with clubs, some with spears, some with scythes. William had a splendid force of mail-clad cavalry and a number of archers.

Battle of
Hastings.

The Normans began the attack, but neither the arrows nor the charges of horsemen could shake the English. Man after man of William's best knights went down under the English axes. The day wore on towards afternoon, and still Harold held his ground. Had he had with him the warriors who had fallen at Stamford Bridge, or even the lingering forces of Edwin and Morcar, he might have won. But his ill-trained levies ruined him. When they saw the Bretons on the left of the Duke's army fall into confusion, many of them left their position to pursue the foe whom they thought beaten. William ordered his men to wheel about and charge. The English, caught in the open ground, were no match for the Norman cavalry, who cut them down with ease. Twice the manœuvre was repeated, and twice the English rushed into the trap. Then William led his knights to a fresh charge on the bodyguard who had stood firm by Harold. Although desperately outnumbered, these stood firm till Harold himself was mortally wounded by an arrow in the eye. Then at length the wall of shields was broken; the English guard were overpowered and slain where they stood; and when the sun had set, Duke William found himself the victor.

Shakespeare has written—

“ This England never did—nor never shall—
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror
But when it first did help to wound itself.”

The period of English history which we have followed in this chapter gives us a striking example of this. Twice in ninety years was England at a conqueror's feet. It was not for want of valour. None could be braver than Edmund Ironside or Harold. None could do more than give their lives for their country, and the English army at Hastings poured out its blood like water for its king. It was not the open enemy that was to be feared, but the familiar friend; not the Dane or Norman, but the recreant Englishman. The falseness of Æthelred, the treachery of Eadric, the rebellion of Tostig—these were the true causes of the Saxon downfall.

CHAPTER 5

THE NORMAN CONQUEST. FEUDALISM

After the battle of Hastings William marched slowly towards London. He might have expected that the country of Alfred and Edmund Ironside would not submit after one defeat only. The English were still quarrelling among themselves. And so, though the Witan chose Eadgar the Ætheling, the grandson of Edmund Ironside, to succeed Harold as king, yet in a short time they found it hopeless to resist further. An embassy, with Eadgar himself at the head of it, came to William and offered him the crown. Thus William was able to say that he ruled, not as a conqueror, but as the lawful king, elected by the Witan and supported and served by English and Normans alike.

This was a great advantage, but William was still in a very difficult position. He had two things to do: the first, to keep his own Norman followers contented and

William I,
1066-87.

obedient, to reward them, and yet not make them so strong that they could revolt against him; the second, to subdue the English thoroughly. He had, in fact, to keep himself master of both Normans and English.

His first stroke was to declare that all those who had fought against him at Hastings were rebels, and that their lands were forfeited to him. Their vast estates, comprising almost all the land in the south of England, he used to reward his Norman followers. For a time he left those English nobles and prelates who had not sided with Harold undisturbed in the possession of their lands and dignities. But rebellion after rebellion, culminating in 1069 in a great rising which set the whole of Northumbria aflame, convinced him that his English subjects must be deprived of their power to hurt. To teach them a lesson he killed and burned and plundered in northern England till he had turned most of it into an uninhabited and uninhabitable waste. Then he stripped the remaining English magnates of their lands and offices. The English earl he replaced by a Norman count; the English sheriff by a Norman viscount—which means the same thing; when an English bishop or abbot died he put a Norman cleric in his place. Even when an Englishman's estates were not taken from him, he was obliged to pay a large fine, and to admit that the land was really the king's and not his own; that he was the king's tenant and vassal, and therefore bound to serve him.

Norman
Control
estab-
lished.

Thus was set up all over England what was known as the Feudal System. To understand it we must fix our eyes upon the land, for the land was the basis of it all. The king at the head was the owner of all the land. He granted large estates to his nobles, who were called tenants-in-chief, and who held their land, not by the payment of a money rent, but by military tenure. They were bound, in other

The
Feudal
System.

words, to follow the king to war if he called on them to do so, at the head of a certain number of knights, mounted and clad in armour. Some even of the church lands were held in this fashion; the bishop or abbot was not expected to join the king's army in person, though he often did, as long as he sent the required number of knights. The tenants-in-chief, in their turn, after reserving part of their lands, called the demesne, to themselves, granted the rest to their followers, who were also bound to obey the tenants-in-chief as their superiors, and who too, after retaining a demesne for their own use, let out the rest of their land. Below these tenants-in-chief and sub-tenants were a vast number of peasants, who worked small holdings of land, thirty acres of arable at most. Some of these peasants were free men; the great majority were villeins or serfs.

Thus all men were divided into ranks. We may think of society in feudal times as a sort of pyramid; hosts of peasants at the bottom owing obedience to their lords who held the land; next a large number of minor tenants owing obedience to the tenants-in-chief; and then a small number of tenants-in-chief, the earls and barons, owing obedience to the one king at the top. It was the land which bound them all together. Everyone had rights or duties which depended on the way he was connected with the land. The king was the master of all because he was master of all the land; the barons were his "vassals", subject to him, because they held his land; but they were lords over the serfs, because these did not hold land as freemen at all.

It is easy to see that the English came off badly in this arrangement. As the Norman friends of the king were put at the top, the English naturally sank to the bottom. Many of those who in days before the Conquest had been free, though they were owners only of a few

Many
English
become
Serfs.

acres, now found themselves reduced to being serfs, or, as they were sometimes called, villeins.

We must see what this meant for them. In the first place, they were no longer free. They were bound to the land and could not leave it. They were forced to work three or four days in each week on their lord's estate, without being paid for doing so. They could not give their daughters in marriage without their lord's leave. And beyond all this, they were in his power. He could punish them almost as he chose by fining them, or causing them to be flogged, and they could not get any redress. This was bad enough, but it was made worse by the fact that their lords were almost always foreigners. The Normans despised the English. They called them "dogs of Saxons", and treated them worse than dogs. They did not understand the English tongue, and paid no attention to what the English said or felt. William might pretend that he had, after all, only taken the place of Harold on the English throne, but to the English he was indeed a conqueror, and a very hard conqueror as well.

The English might think their new position a bad one, and so indeed it was, but it might have been worse; we shall see that it became so when the strong hand of William and his sons was removed. The fact was that William ruled sternly, but he ruled all alike. He had been himself a feudal vassal before he became a feudal king. As Duke of Normandy he had been so strong in his own dominions that he could disobey his superior, the King of France, altogether. He was not willing to let his barons be as troublesome to him in England as he himself had been to the King of France. So he did two very wise things.

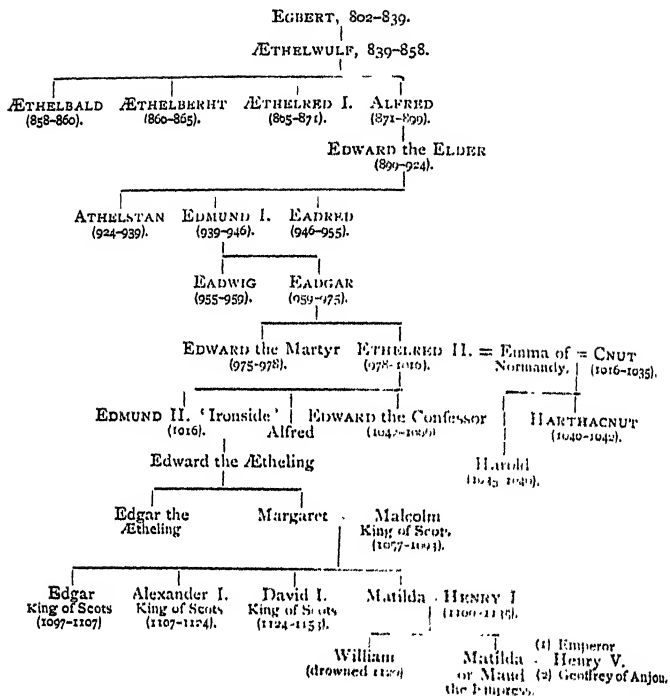
First: William summoned all the sub-tenants who were of any consequence to Salisbury, and made them swear that they would be faithful to him before any

Serfs.

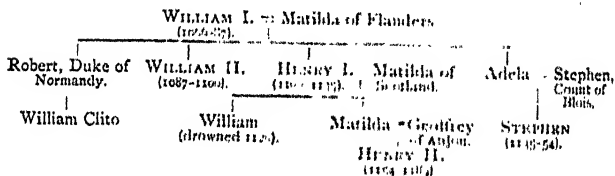
William keeps a strong rule over the Barons.

Oath at Salisbury, 1086.

THE HOUSE OF EGBERT.



THE ANGLO-NORMAN KINGS.



other man, even their lord. Thus, if some lord ordered his vassals to join him in a rebellion against the king, they would reply that their first duty was not to him but to their sovereign.

Secondly: William caused a great register to be compiled, in which was set down all the land of England and who owned it, and what it was worth, so that he might know exactly what was due to him, and so that no one should be able to dispute over it. This register was called the Domesday Book, and it was so detailed and accurate that it even tells us how many villeins, and oxen, and sheep, and pigs, and mills, and fish-ponds there were on every estate in England. Many people thought it was unworthy of a king to inquire into things like these. One writer says, "it is shame to be telling of, but he did not think it shame to be doing it". William, however, did not feel any shame in finding out all about his kingdom, in order to rule it well.

**Domesday
Book.**

Yet with all the care he took William could not escape trouble. The English rebelled against him; the Danes and Norwegians threatened invasion; his Norman barons rebelled against him; and even his eldest son allied himself with the King of France against him. So William spent much of his time in fighting, which was after all what he loved best. For kings and barons in those days thought that the chief business of life was fighting. They despised those who stayed peaceably at home. At last, as William was watching his men burn the French town of Mantes, the horse on which he was riding was frightened by a blazing beam which fell near it, and reared. The king was thrown so hard against the pommel of his saddle that he suffered injuries of which he died a few days after.

**William's
Troubles.**

William II, who is called Rufus—the Red—from his appearance, was a stern, hard man like his father, but far

William II,
1087-1100.

Quarrel
with
Anselm.

less just. He made his chancellor, Ranulf Flambard, take much money from his people, who grew to hate both king and chancellor; and indeed the next king put Ranulf Flambard to death. William Rufus quarrelled also with the Church. It happened that he fell ill, and as he thought he was dying, he wished to try to atone for his sins; so he appointed Anselm to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, a see which he had been keeping vacant in order to get its revenues for himself. Anselm was a good, gentle monk, and to those who brought the news of his appointment he said, "Will you couple me, a poor weak old sheep, to that fierce young bull the King of England?" Yet when he was once made archbishop, he soon showed that he would not submit to the king when the king was acting wrongly. He refused to pay the king for giving him the archbishopric, and rebuked him for his ill-deeds so sharply, that at last the king grew furious, and would have murdered him had he dared. So, having provoked his subjects and his barons and the Church by his severity and greed for money, he was not regretted when he was killed by an arrow while hunting in the New Forest.

Henry I,
1100-35.

Henry I, who followed Rufus, was also a strong king, and not a merciful one. He kept his elder brother, Duke Robert of Normandy, in prison till he died. Once when he thought the men who coined his money were cheating him, he ordered the right hand of every one of them to be cut off. His barons rebelled against him, but he always overcame them. He kept such strict order in England that he was called the Lion of Justice. This alone would have made his English subjects like him, but they were still more pleased when he married Matilda of Scotland, who was descended from the old kings of Wessex. The Norman barons laughed at the king, who, they thought, was lowering himself by marrying a princess whose Saxon blood they despised. They nicknamed the royal

pair "Farmer Godric and his cummer Godgifu". But when a Norman king could marry an English wife, it was clear that the two races would not remain separated much longer.

CHAPTER 6

THE WORST EVILS OF FEUDALISM. THE RESTORATION OF ORDER

In the last chapter we have seen England conquered; we might even say enslaved. It seems strange that after the first few years the English made no effort to get free. It was the Norman barons who made the rebellions. "But," we are tempted to ask ourselves, "if the people hated a king as they hated William Rufus, why did not they combine with the barons to drive him out?" It would have been easy, of course; why was it not done? The answer is that Englishmen feared the Norman barons much more than they disliked the king. And they were right. Rufus might be bad, but a rule of the barons would be far worse.

People
want the
King to be
strong.

Henry I's son had been drowned as he was trying to save his sister from the wreck of the *White Ship*, which a drunken steersman had run on the Casquets. The king wished to secure the throne for his daughter Matilda, and during his lifetime had made his barons swear to be faithful to her. But Matilda had married Geoffrey of Anjou, whom the Norman barons hated as a foreigner. And, besides, no one then ever thought a woman to be a fit person to rule the kingdom. Thus, when Henry died the barons helped his nephew, Stephen of Blois, to seize the crown.

Stephen, 1135-54; his Character. Stephen was a grandson of William the Conqueror, so he had some claim. He was also, the chronicler tells us, "a mild man", so that it might be hoped that he would make a good king. But the throne was no place for a mild man at this time. What was wanted was a strong man who could keep order.

Civil War. Stephen gained his crown by the help of the barons and the Church; but soon he fell out with both, and to add to his troubles Matilda landed with an army and laid claim to the kingdom. Then began a long civil war, which went on up and down the country, now one side winning, now the other. At one time Matilda's forces beat Stephen, and took him captive. So she for a time became ruler of England; but she was so haughty that her friends soon deserted her, and then the war began afresh. At another time, in the depth of winter, Stephen had Matilda closely besieged in Oxford. She only escaped by dressing herself all in white, slipping out at night by a postern-gate, crossing the Thames on the ice, and fleeing across the snow. Then she gathered fresh forces and fought again.

Cruelties of the Barons. The fact was that the war went on because the barons had no wish to stop it. When there was a dispute about the succession the king was sure to be weak, and the barons could do as they pleased. Thus, in Stephen's reign England learnt what it really meant when the country was left to the mercy of feudal barons. The chronicler of the time describes what they did. "They built castles, and filled them with devils and evil men. They hanged up men by the feet, and smoked them with foul smoke. Some were hanged up by their thumbs, others by the head, and burning things were hung on to their feet. They put knotted strings about their heads, and writhed them till they went into the brain. They put men into prisons where adders and snakes and toads



III. THE SIEGE OF A THIRTEENTH-CENTURY FORTRESS
(See Note on p. xiii)

were crawling, and so tormented them. Some they put into a chest, short and narrow and not deep, that had sharp stones within, and forced men therein, so that they broke all their bones."

When Stephen brought over foreigners from abroad to fight for him, these behaved even worse, sacking, burning, spoiling wherever they went. "Men said that Christ and his saints slept." The poor were reduced to misery; many of them whose huts had been burnt died of cold and hunger in the fields. It is no wonder that the nineteen years of Stephen's reign were known as the "nineteen long winters".

Henry II, Matilda's son, who succeeded Stephen, had no light task to restore order again. The first thing to be done was to tame the barons. In their castles they had been able to defy their enemies; Henry had their castles pulled down. Since they had held their own law-courts, it had often been impossible for the king's subjects to get justice; Henry limited these courts, and enforced the system of his grandfather, Henry I, who had sent his own travelling justices on circuit round the country to bring all under the king's law, in the same way as the justices go round now to the Assizes. Henry II also began the use in these courts of a jury—that is to say, a body of men who were to say whether in their opinion a man was guilty of a charge brought against him. He drove out the cruel foreign soldiers who had tortured and plundered the people. He took back by force all the crown lands which the weak and foolish King Stephen had parted with. He prevented barons from coining their own money, and he put an end to private war; that is, to one baron attacking another with a private army on account of some private quarrel.

Henry II,
1154-89,
restores
order.

Henry was determined to be master in his own kingdom; and his people backed him up, because they saw

Power of the Church. that many masters, such as the barons, were far harder to serve than one king. But there was another body in England besides the barons which was growing much too powerful. This was the Church. It was the Church, led by Stephen's brother, Henry, Bishop of Winchester, which had put Stephen on the throne. When Stephen quarrelled with the Church, it was mainly by its influence that he had been dethroned, and Matilda made Lady of England in his place. It was the Church again that had brought about the treaty which ended the war and had given the throne to Henry II.

Churchmen and the Law. Besides this, there was another thing which displeased the king. William the Conqueror had given leave for churchmen to be tried in the Church's own courts under the law of the Church. This meant that there were two systems of law in the country—the king's law and the Church's law, and they were very different. For example, a layman who committed a murder was hanged, but if a cleric committed a murder, all that could be done to him was to shut him up in a monastery, for the Church's courts had no power to give sentence of death; and men said that the Church courts often let off offenders very lightly. We might think that clerical murderers were rare, but the king's justices complained that since Henry's accession more than a hundred murderers had escaped justice on the ground that they were clerics. The truth was that the term cleric or clerk included not only parish priests and monks, but almost everyone who had a smattering of learning, even though he was not directly engaged in the service of the Church.

Becket. To restrict the powers of the Church, Henry made his chancellor, Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury. Becket and the king had been great friends. We are told "they would play together like boys of one age", and Henry no doubt thought that a gay courtier,

as Becket seemed, would be ready to do what his friend the king wished in Church matters.

The king was mistaken. As soon as Becket was made archbishop he changed his life altogether: he became solemn and austere. Instead of aiding the king he opposed him. His action seems cantankerous, but it was not so in reality. Before becoming archbishop he had warned the king that he could not fall in with his plans. He feared that if clerics were put under the power of the ordinary law, the authority of the Church would be diminished. To do what Henry asked would in fact have weakened the power of the Church, and to this as a churchman Becket honestly felt that he could not consent. Accordingly when the king desired to have the clergy tried in the royal courts, Becket refused to agree. Henry flew into a rage and drove Becket out of the kingdom.

For six years the quarrel continued. Then it was agreed that Becket might return if he would let bygones be bygones. But Becket did not keep to this; he began to interfere in what had been done in his absence. Henry was a very passionate man, who, when he was angry, would even fling himself down on the floor and bite the rushes which were then used instead of carpets. On hearing what Becket had done, he cried out furiously, "Are there none of the cowards eating my bread who will rid me of this turbulent priest?" Four knights who heard him set off for Canterbury, followed Becket into the cathedral and hewed him down with their swords as he turned about to defy them. Becket murdered, 1170.

Everyone was horrified at such a wicked murder and thought that Henry was responsible for it. Becket was regarded as a martyr and a saint. Men went on pilgrimage to his tomb, since it was believed that miraculous cures were wrought there. Even Henry himself, proud

king as he was, went to the tomb, and bared his back to be scourged by the monks as a sign that he repented. But the evil effects of his own passionate words and his followers' barbarous action did not end here. The king had to give up his attempt to bring the clergy under the ordinary law; and three hundred years passed before clergy were made liable to be tried for crimes, and punished for them in the same way as ordinary men.

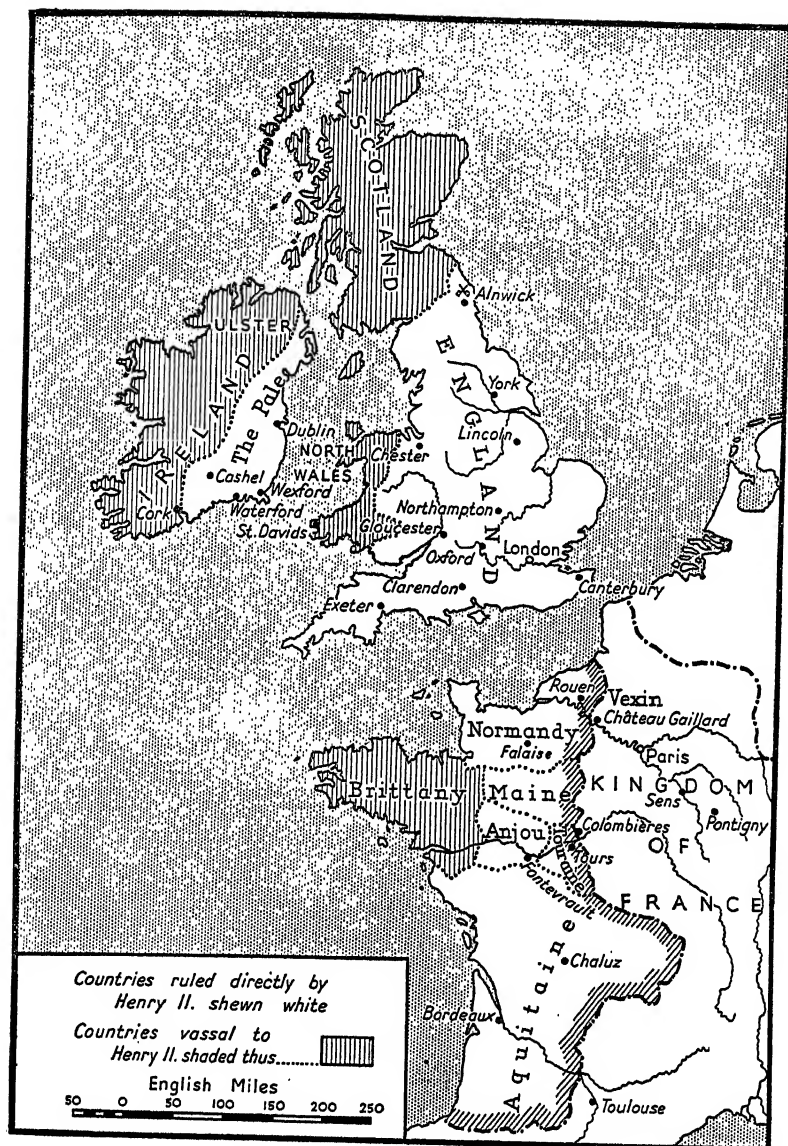
What we have to notice in the reign of Henry II is the restoration of order in the country. The king strove to make all persons subject to the crown: to make the law supreme over all—powerful nobles and churchmen alike. In his first object he was successful, in the second he failed. But he failed, not because what he was attempting was unwise or unjust, but because he was put in the wrong by the foolish violence of those who thought they were helping him.

CHAPTER 7

ENGLISH KINGS AND THEIR CONTINENTAL POSSESSIONS. RICHARD I AND THE THIRD CRUSADE

Henry II was a great restorer of law and order in England; we think of him as the strong king who saved his people from the harsh rule of feudal barons. But to men of his own day, that was very far from being the most remarkable thing about him. To them he was a great king, master of wider dominions than ever a king of England had ruled before. The greater part of Wales owed him obedience; and one of Henry's barons named Strongbow had crossed into Ireland, and had made most

Henry II's
Foreign
Do-
minions.



THE DOMINIONS OF HENRY II

of the Irish chieftains submit to him, so that Henry ruled over the Pale, the district round Dublin, and was in name king of the rest of Ireland too. Then he was successful in his wars against the Scots. His soldiers had captured the Scottish king, William the Lion, at Alnwick, and Henry did not allow him to go till he had done homage for his dominions; that was intended to show that the Scottish king held his kingdom as a grant from Henry. Thus Henry might claim to be lord also over Scotland. But beyond all this he ruled over more of France than the French king himself: in addition to Normandy and Anjou, he had become master of the whole of south-western France from the Loire to the Pyrenees through his marriage with Eleanor of Aquitaine.

Henry's son, Richard I, is often regarded as a typical Englishman. His very nickname, "Lion-heart", makes us think of the British lion. His strength, his daring against odds, his rough good-nature, his love of adventure, are all qualities that the Englishman of to-day admires. Yet this typical king was, in a way, more of a foreigner than any other king who has ruled over us. Out of his reign of ten years he only spent seven months in England. Still, even if Englishmen did not see much of their king, he showed the world outside what a king of England could do, and he made the name of our nation renowned among all the best warriors of Europe.

As soon as he came to the throne he made up his mind to join the great army of Crusaders that had set out to deliver the Holy City, Jerusalem, from the Saracens. To get money to pay his men he let off William the Lion from the duty of giving the homage which Henry II had won. We shall see by and by how important this became. But for the present Richard was ready to sell anything. He even said in joke: "I would have sold London itself if I could have found a rich enough buyer."

Richard I,
1189-99.

Richard
and the
Third
Crusade,
1189-92.

When Richard reached the Holy Land he found the Crusaders doing very badly. They were trying to take Acre, but were making no headway with the siege. With Richard once on the spot all was changed. The Lion-heart soon showed that he deserved his name. He was always foremost in the attack, risking his life like a common soldier, but fighting with ten times the vigour. In three weeks Acre was taken. Duke Leopold of Austria planted his banner on the walls of it as if he had taken it himself. Richard was not the man to allow the glory to be stolen from him. He ordered the German banner to be cast into a ditch, and put his own in its place. But this act offended Leopold very much, and Richard had to pay for it later.

In the meantime, however, all the Crusaders followed him as the best leader, and he defeated the Saracen hosts in two great battles. Yet he never captured Jerusalem, because the French king went home with his men, and left Richard with too small an army to do anything. He got within sight of the Holy City, but he could not bear to look at it. "My eyes," he cried, "shall never behold it, if my arm may not reconquer it." With that he turned back.

Then, hearing that his brother John was plotting to take the throne of England from him, he started homewards. His ship, however, was wrecked, and he was cast ashore in the domain of the very Duke of Austria whose flag he had insulted at Acre. Leopold kept him in prison for a time and then surrendered him to the Emperor, Henry VI, and he too kept him captive. It was said that his prison was discovered by a minstrel named Blondel, who passed outside singing a song of Richard's own, and Richard answered by singing the song again.

Richard's
Captivity.

After some delay the king was ransomed and returned to England. There he found that John had been assert-

ing that he was dead, and was trying to make himself king in his place. But everyone hated John, who was mean and cunning and cruel; and they were delighted to welcome Richard again. Richard was too good-natured to punish John. He despised him too much to be afraid of him.

Richard's death was much like his life. No sooner was he home than he began a war with the King of France, who was trying to get for himself the districts in France which belonged to the English crown. At last, while besieging the castle of Chaluz, Richard was struck by an arrow in the neck. The archer who shot it was brought before the dying king. Richard bade his officers send him away unharmed. It is sad to think that they did not obey the orders, but had the unlucky man flayed alive.

John, a very different kind of man. He could not keep his possessions in France, as Richard had done, by dint of hard fighting. He was too lazy and careless. Besides, he was so treacherous that all disliked him, and few cared to fight for him. He captured and put to death his boy nephew Arthur, a deed which made everyone shrink from him. So Philip the French king had little difficulty in reconquering all John's land in France except a small piece in the south, and thus John's nickname of "Lackland", given him by his father years before, doubly fitted him.

Loss of
French
Possessions.
1199-1216.

John's failure to keep his French possessions had great results in the history of our kingdom. So long as our kings were rulers over half of France as well as over England, they were inclined to pay little attention to English affairs; yet when these dominions oversea were lost, the king had to become an English king in reality as well as in name, and do what his subjects wanted. We shall see

in the next chapter that the people of England made John, who was the worst king England has ever known, give them something which has been of more importance than anything else in the whole of our history.

CHAPTER 8

MAGNA CARTA. THE EVOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT IN ENGLAND

John, now forced to stay at home in England, soon succeeded in disgusting everyone by his behaviour. First of all he wanted to appoint a friend of his as Archbishop of Canterbury. But Pope Innocent III thought John's friend unworthy and chose Stephen Langton. John flew into a furious rage and swore he would never receive Langton. Innocent, however, would not give way either, and first he excommunicated John, and then put the realm under an interdict: that is to say, he forbade all services; the churches were closed; even the dead could not be buried in consecrated ground. Then, as John was still obstinate, the Pope invited the King of France to send over an army to put him off the throne. At last John gave way. In sign that he submitted he even gave up his crown to Pandulf, the Pope's legate, and received it back from him as a gift from the Pope. John and the Pope.

John continued to govern so badly that something had to be done. Accordingly Stephen Langton and the barons held a great meeting, to which they invited representatives from every shire to come and declare their grievances against the king, and consider what should be done to restrain him. John tried to collect forces, but he could do nothing. He had not to resist the barons alone; Magna Carta, 1215.

he had to meet the clergy, the knights, and the citizens of the towns as well. Indeed, everyone was united against him, and he had to give way. He met the barons at Runnymede, and there his seal was affixed to Magna Carta.

We must notice particularly two things to which the king bound himself.

(1) He was not to accept money in exchange for military service except by common consent of the realm, given in the Great Council, to which not only the greater barons and churchmen were to be summoned, but all those who held land from the king.

(2) No freeman was to be imprisoned or punished except after trial by his equals; and the charter adds, "to none will we sell, to none will we deny right or justice".

Neither in those clauses nor anywhere else in the Charter was the king conferring new rights and privileges; he was confirming old ones, in which most Englishmen, because they were not freemen, had no share. The important thing to observe is that John had given his assent to the principle that even the king is not above the law; that the law must be obeyed by sovereign and subject alike.

The
Struggle
over the
Charter.

John sealed the charter and promised to obey it; he gave his promise because at the time there was nothing else for him to do; and he gave it willingly, because from the first he had not the slightest intention of keeping it. He got the Pope to say that he was not bound by his oath—an easy and comfortable way of clearing his conscience. In less than a year he and the barons were again at war. The barons even invited the French king's son into England to fight against John, and they offered him the crown, but the struggle was stopped for the time by John's sudden death.

The new king, Henry III, was a boy of nine years old, so until he grew up the barons in the Great Council were able to govern as they wished. But when Henry became a man, he took the reins of power into his own hands. In many ways he was very different from John. He was an artist-king, a lover of beautiful things, a builder of noble churches, like Westminster Abbey. But he resembled John in ruling badly. He trusted much to foreign favourites, and he spent a great deal of money in giving large sums to the Pope for purposes which did not concern England. So by degrees men began to think that he too must be forced to govern better.

Henry III,
1216-72.

The leader of the party who wanted reform was Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, who had married the king's sister. Henry at first liked him. He had sent him to govern Guienne, the one province of France that still belonged to England. Simon was a good soldier and he had ruled it well, but Henry grew tired of him, and very meanly left Simon to pay from his own pocket the money which he had spent in the king's service.

Simon de
Montfort.

Thus Earl Simon came home in disgust, and put himself at the head of the barons. They assembled in a Great Council, or, as we may now call it, a Parliament, for the word is first used in Henry III's reign, and arranged that all that the king did was to be overlooked by a committee of barons. The king promised to keep these "Provisions of Oxford" as they were called, but he was as false as John. He too got the Pope to declare him quit of his oath, and so nothing was left for Simon and his party but to go to war. Each side gathered forces, and they met at Lewes. The king's army was bigger, but he lost the day because his son Edward pursued some fugitives too far. When he returned Simon had won the battle. Both Henry and Edward were made captive.

Battle of
Lewes,
1264.

Simon had no wish to seize the throne for himself;

Simon's Parliament, 1265. he only wanted to have the kingdom well governed, so he called a Parliament. It is this Parliament which gives Simon a title to be remembered for ever as one of the makers of the British constitution.

Hitherto the assembly which had helped the king to govern England had consisted of barons and churchmen. But Simon was not content with this; he summoned as well two knights from each shire, and two burgesses from each borough. Here for the first time we have the appearance in Parliament of the men who now compose the House of Commons. Simon may be called the founder of this House.

Battle of Evesham; Death of Simon. Simon governed well, but he could not prevent the barons who should have supported him from growing jealous of his power. So after a year the king's party raised a fresh army, led by Prince Edward. Simon was surrounded at Evesham and killed, fighting bravely in the midst of his followers.

He had set a good example. He had summoned the first Parliament, which contained, as our parliaments do to-day, lords, county members and borough members. But Simon was in a sense a rebel. It might be that no king would care to imitate what he had done; in this case nothing might have come of his experiment.

Edward I, 1272-1307. Curiously enough the man who followed Simon's example, and made his new scheme the regular rule for governing England, was the very one whom Simon regarded as his most bitter foe. The same Prince Edward, who had overthrown Simon at Evesham, adopted his measure when he became King Edward I. In 1295 he caused to be summoned a Parliament like Simon's Parliament, including knights of the shire and citizens from the towns; and by doing so he settled for ever the question of who should sit in Parliament. From this time onward no one would think that a Parliament was pro-

perly formed unless it included these representatives of the people. Thus Edward's Parliament of 1295 is always called the "Model Parliament", as it gave an example to all others to copy.

Model
Parlia-
ment.

Of course Parliament of those days differed much from the Parliaments we know. It was one house, not two, for until Edward III's reign both lords and commons sat together. Now the commons are much the more powerful, but then the lords held the chief power. Now the monarch follows the wishes of Parliament in the choice of his ministers; then he did not consult its wishes. Now Parliament meets every year, and is in session almost all the year round; then it met at long intervals, and its sessions were short. But in spite of these differences, in nature Parliament of to-day is as it was then: it refuses to allow the king to take taxes; it asks him to consent to new laws which it has made; and on occasions we may find it exercising very great power. It could dethrone kings who governed badly. For instance, it assisted to depose Edward I's own son, Edward II; and, eighty years later, it supported Henry IV, when he compelled Richard II to abdicate. We cannot, indeed, say that it ruled England all the time, or that it undertook all branches of government as it does now; but it had made a beginning and we shall see its activities and its authority steadily increase.

Powers of
Parlia-
ment in the
Fourteenth
Century.

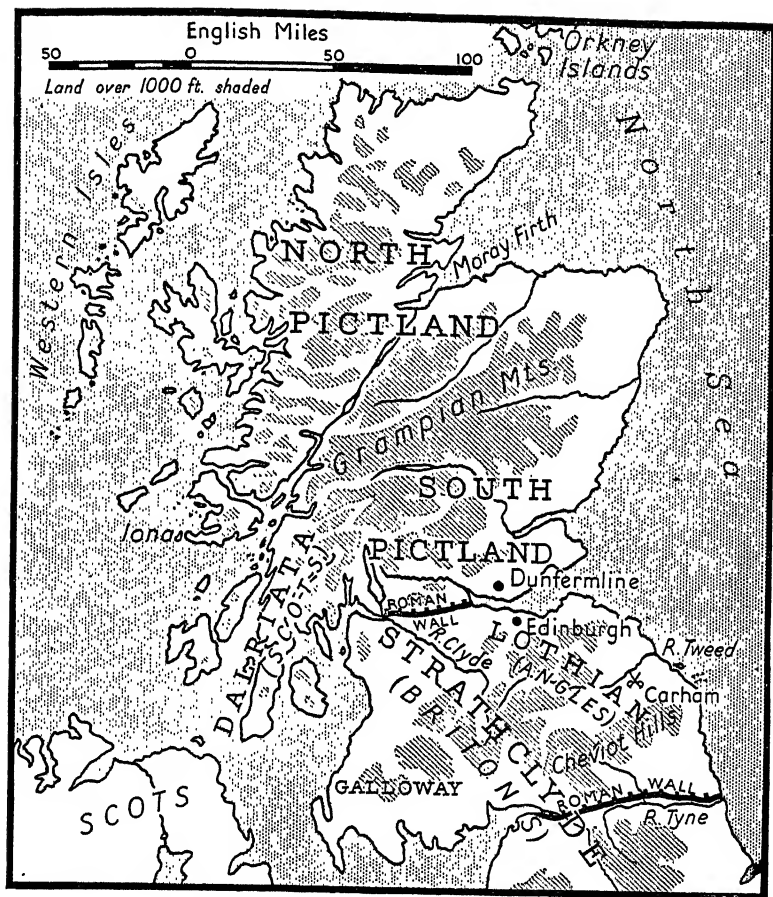
CHAPTER 9

THE MAKING OF SCOTLAND

Since it is during the reign of Edward I that the affairs of England and Scotland become seriously entangled, it is convenient at this point to turn back and see what the kingdom of Scotland was, and how it had been formed.

Four
Kingdoms
in Scot-
land.
Four separate kingdoms have gone to make up Scotland as it is now: Pictland, which occupied almost all the land north of the Forth and Clyde; Dalriata, the kingdom of the Scots in Argyllshire; the kingdom called Strathclyde, which stretched originally from the Clyde to the Ribble, inhabited by Britons; and last, that part of the kingdom of Northumbria which lay between the Tweed and the Forth. The Scots, who had migrated from Ireland at the beginning of the sixth century, spoke Gaelic, a Celtic language rather different from Welsh. Northumbrian English was spoken by the ruling classes in Lothian, where the conquered Britons still used their old Celtic speech.

Unification
of Scot-
land, 843-
1018.
The way to union was prepared by St. Columba, who had landed in Iona in 563. The Scots, who had come from Ireland about sixty years before, were already Christian, and Columba converted the Picts to his form of the Christian faith. There was no real union, however, for many years, and, indeed, at one time it seemed as if the Angles would overrun the whole of North Britain. Their hopes were dashed in 685 when the Picts and Scots defeated them at Nechtansmere, in Angus. Union actually began in 843 when Kenneth MacAlpin, King of the Scots, ascended the Pictish throne. There was



NORTH BRITAIN—SIXTH TO NINTH CENTURY

probably some fighting, but Kenneth had a legitimate claim, and his success was made possible by the raids of the Norsemen, which had greatly weakened the power of the Picts. The united kingdom over which Kenneth ruled was called Alba, and though the influence of the

king was very slight in the far north, we have in this union the beginnings of Scotland as we now know it.

Raiders from the North. The kings of Alba made several attempts to conquer Strathclyde and Lothian, but at first without success. Meantime the Norsemen continued their raids and made settlements in the Hebrides, in the Orkney Islands, in Caithness, and at various places all along the Scottish coast. Early in the tenth century these raids caused two curious alliances. First of all Constantine II, King of Alba, allied with the English against the Danes, and then becoming alarmed at the growing power of the English, he formed an alliance with the Norsemen and the British of Strathclyde against the English. In 937 he was defeated by Athelstan, King of the English, at Brunanburh.

The Battle of Carham, 1018. Eight years later, however, Athelstan's successor, King Edmund, finding that the Danes were using Strathclyde as a back door entrance to his territories in north-eastern England, harried it and then entrusted it to the Scottish king, Malcolm I, who thus became its overlord. Edmund's son, King Edgar, soon after his coronation, in 973, transferred the whole of Lothian, into which the Scots had been infiltrating, to Kenneth II, who did homage to him for it. In 1018 the English Earl of Northumbria challenged the right of the Scots to Lothian, but the crushing defeat which King Malcolm II inflicted on him at Carham decided once and for all that Lothian was to be part of Scotland. In the same year the last semi-independent King of Strathclyde died. He was succeeded by Duncan, the grandson of Malcolm, who, when Malcolm died in 1034, became the first king of a united Scotland. It was very many years, however, before the various peoples in Scotland came to regard one another as fellow-countrymen, or even to speak the same language. For a time it seemed as if Gaelic would become the language of the whole of Scotland.

Bane. His army contained large contingents of Normans, sent by William Rufus, who came in search of adventures and estates. When the war was over, many of them were granted lands in Scotland. At a later time David I, Malcolm's youngest son, who had passed much of his youth at the court of his Norman brother-in-law, Henry I, invited many Norman lords to settle in Scotland, and granted them large estates. And so it comes that many famous Scottish families boast of a Norman or at least of a French origin. The Bruces, for example, came from Normandy, the Stewarts from Brittany.

So Norman-French was spoken by the great folk in the castle, but English, the Northumbrian English from which modern Lowland Scots is descended, crept westward to the Clyde, and northward up the east coast to the Moray Firth, invading the dwellings of ordinary people, the huts of peasants and fishermen, and the booths and workshops of burgesses in the little burghs.

The marriage of Malcolm with Margaret had still other results. Malcolm, as a relative of the old kings of England, became an enemy of William the Conqueror. Hence we have a fresh reason for wars between England and Scotland. Indeed, it was while invading England that Malcolm was slain. His youngest son David patched up these quarrels for a time, since it was his sister Matilda who married Henry I. But David, although King of Scotland, was also an English baron. He held two earldoms in England. He was the first man to take the oath to put Henry I's daughter, Matilda, on the throne. Consequently we find him taking part in the wars of Stephen's reign. Like many others, he could not resist the temptation of fishing for himself in troubled waters. He was defeated at the Battle of the Standard in 1138,

David,
1124-53.

yet managed to get Stephen to give him Northumberland, Cumberland, and Westmorland.

Henry II, however, looked on this just as he looked on the rest of Stephen's actions, and he did not intend to be bound by it. He made Malcolm IV, David's successor, restore the three counties, and when he captured William the Lion, compelled him by the Treaty of Falaise to do homage for the whole of his kingdom. Richard I sold this homage back again.

Treaty of
Falaise,
1174.

Thus the relations between the two countries were in a tangle. The English kings had tried to make out some claim to be lords over the kings of Scotland. They could point to gifts of territory and to acts of homage. On the other hand, the kings of Scotland could say that these gifts really implied nothing; that the homage was for English earldoms which they held, and not for their Scottish dominions; and that if any homage was due for Scotland itself, Richard's bargain had cancelled it. Yet so far there was no national enmity between English and Scots. They did not glory in being different races. They fought indeed at times, but at long intervals, and then only to support the claims which their kings made to each other's territory. And even at the Battle of the Standard David of Scotland fought under the flag of the Dragon, the same sign as that which King Alfred had used, while a Robert Bruce, an ancestor of the Scottish patriot king, was in the English ranks. Scotland had not yet begun to think of England as a tyrant, nor did England look on Scotland as a rebel. This more bitter feeling was to spring from the doings of Edward I, to which we must next turn.

Anglo-
Scottish
Relations.

CHAPTER 10

EDWARD I IN WALES AND SCOTLAND

We have seen Edward I give England a Parliament in which all classes were represented—a Parliament that carried out the idea of a united English nation. But Edward was not content with this. He aimed at something much wider—at bringing the whole island of Britain under his rule.

His first effort was to join Wales to England. Piece by piece that country had been subdued, until the dominions left to the Prince of Wales included only the mountainous north-west corner of the country. Llewellyn, who was ruler there, refused to submit to the king. Edward led an army into Wales, and Llewellyn retired with his forces into the Snowdon range, feeling sure that the king could not follow him. Edward was much too wise to try. Instead of wasting his men among steep rocks, he blocked up all the passes, brought up a fleet to guard the coast, and starved Llewellyn out.

Llewellyn submitted in 1277, but he could not keep his word. Three years later he and his brother David raised a fresh rebellion. This failed also; the Prince himself was killed in single combat with one of Edward's followers; in 1283 David was captured and put to death by the King as a traitor. The whole country came into Edward's hands, and he showed that he meant to keep it by bridling it with great stone castles and by bestowing on his son the title of the Prince of Wales, a title ever since given to the eldest son of English monarchs.

Edward now turned to Scotland, and Scottish affairs at this time gave him an excellent chance. Since the

reign of John the two kingdoms had been fairly good friends. The last two Scottish kings, Alexander II and Alexander III, had both married English princesses, and now, on the sudden death of Alexander III, his granddaughter Margaret, daughter of the King of Norway, was left heir to the throne. Edward's plan was to unite the two kingdoms by a marriage between this Maid of Norway and his own son, Edward, Prince of Wales.

Edward
and
Scotland;
Union by
Marriage.

No one can deny that the plan was good, always provided that it was to be wisely carried out. That the union of the two kingdoms has been of benefit to both is undoubted, and it is fair to think that it might have been as useful in 1286 as it proved to be in 1707. People felt this at the time, for the Scottish nobles and prelates wrote to Edward, "we on our part heartily consent to the alliance, not doubting that you will agree to reasonable conditions". Edward was very reasonable. In the Treaty of Brigham, which arranged the matter, it was laid down that Scotland was to retain her laws, rights, and liberties, and to remain a separate kingdom. Edward did not, it is plain, look for an immediate or complete union. The union of the crowns would be a good beginning; the rest would follow in course of time. Again we may notice that this was what actually did happen much later.

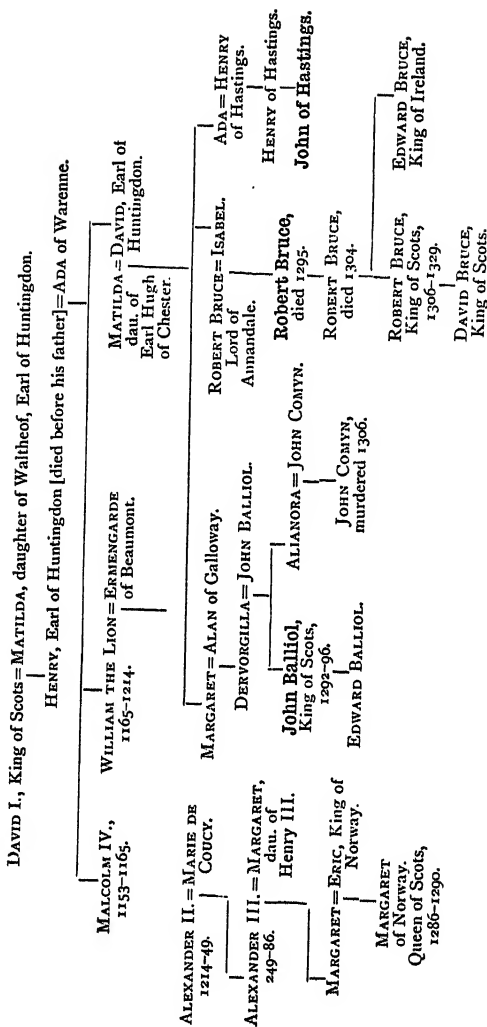
Unluckily all depended on the Maid of Norway, and she fell ill on the voyage from her father's country to Scotland, and had to be landed in Orkney, where she soon died. Thus Edward's scheme failed, and what was far worse, Scotland was left without an heir to the throne.

Death of
the Maid
of Norway.

Edward would have acted most wisely if he had recognized that the great chance had gone, and if he had given up any idea of further interference in Scotland. But he saw that his plan was still as good, though it was no longer

Problem
of the
Scottish
Succession.

THE SCOTTISH SUCCESSION.



(The names of the three claimants are given in heavy type.)

so easy to carry out. And he was encouraged to go on, since the Scottish barons begged him to act as umpire between the rival claimants to the throne.

Englishmen are too ready to look solely at Edward's object, and to forget his unwise and afterwards violent methods; Scots sometimes only see the latter, and accuse the king of deliberate treachery in all he did. Edward thought of the old English claims over Scotland in the narrow spirit of a lawyer. The Scots urged that these had been sold. But questions of this kind cannot be decided in legal documents or haggled over as if they were merchandise. Edward had determined to be lord over Britain, cost what it might. Scotland was equally determined to be free. Thus if we argue about oaths and rights we are wasting our breath. Edward may have broken oaths, but Robert Bruce did the same. English troops harried and burnt, but Scottish troops were no whit behind them. We must judge men in times like these by what they felt to be their duty to their country, as things came before them, and not by what they had sworn.

When the Scottish barons met Edward at Norham there were thirteen candidates. Edward required them all to acknowledge him as lord paramount of Scotland, which they did. A court of eighty Scots and twenty-four Englishmen tried the question. John Balliol and Robert Bruce had the best titles. Balliol was chosen and placed on the throne.

Choice of
Balliol.

The reign of John Balliol is always regarded as a disgrace alike to king and nation, but it is hard to see that Balliol could have done better. Edward took care, before he set him on the throne, to make him swear to be obedient to him, and he treated him as if he were a vassal. Balliol was weak, but not too weak to object. He refused to help Edward in his war against France, and instead, in 1295, made an alliance with Edward's enemy, the King

Balliol's
Difficulties.

of France, thus starting the "Auld Alliance" of Scotland and France.

This defiance angered Edward, and in the following year, he marched into Scotland with an army to subdue one whom he looked on as a rebel. He stormed Berwick, where the inhabitants were brutally massacred by his soldiers; he defeated a Scottish army at Dunbar, where the Scots rushed down to attack what they thought to be a retreating force and were themselves routed; and he soon overran the whole country. Balliol was deposed, and Edward took Scotland for himself, setting up Warenne, Cressingham, and Ormesby as the chief officials. Scotland as an independent kingdom seemed to have come to an end.

Edward
conquers
Scotland.

CHAPTER 11

THE STRUGGLE FOR SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE. WALLACE AND BRUCE

From the first no one had liked Balliol. Yet when a king of England showed that he meant to conquer Scotland and make it part of his kingdom by force, the whole of Scotland determined to resist. Hitherto Edward had had, in the main, to deal with the Scottish barons, many of them Norman in blood, with lands on both sides of the border. Now he had to encounter something quite different, the Scottish people in arms against him.

The hero round whom a national spirit gathered was Wallace. Sir William Wallace. Wallace had engaged in a street brawl in the town of Lanark, had slain an English sheriff, and had taken to the hills. He was joined by all to whom the English invaders were hateful, and soon found him-

self at the head of a considerable force. He advanced to meet the English at Stirling. Cressingham, who despised his enemy, tried to cross the Forth over a bridge so narrow that only two horsemen could ride abreast on it. Wallace attacked when a third of the English army was across, and routed it. Cressingham himself fell in the battle and the rest of his army scattered. All the fortresses fell, and the invaders were driven from Scotland. Wallace followed up this blow by leading an army into England and raiding the northern counties.

Battle of
Stirling
Bridge,
1297.

Edward was not the man to put up with this. He made up his mind to go to Scotland in person and crush Wallace. This did not seem easy. Wallace retreated, and Edward could not hear where the Scottish army lay. In the meanwhile he found it hard to feed his men, since the country had been laid waste around him. At last Wallace's situation was betrayed to him by two discontented Scottish nobles. Edward instantly set out by night, and came on Wallace in a skilfully chosen position near Falkirk. Two charges of the English knights were beaten off by the Scottish spearmen, but then Edward brought his archers into action. The Scots were shot down without being able to reply, and a third and final charge broke the Scottish array.

Battle of
Falkirk,
1298.

For seven years Edward strove to complete his conquest. He led army after army into the country, but so long as Wallace was at large the resistance went on. At length, in 1305, Wallace was betrayed by some of his followers to Sir John Menteith, who was acting as Edward's sheriff in Dumbarton, and by him handed over to Edward. Wallace was taken to England, and tried as a traitor to King Edward. He denied that he could be a traitor, since he had never sworn to obey Edward. But the king had him condemned. He was beheaded, and his body, cut into four pieces, was fixed on the gates of

Capture
and Death
of Wallace.

Newcastle, Berwick, Stirling, and Perth. Edward meant to warn the Scots against further risings, but he made a great mistake. His cruel treatment of Wallace only made the Scots hate him the more.

With Wallace dead, Edward might think that Scotland was subdued. In a year the Scots had found a fresh leader. Robert Bruce, the grandson of him who had been Balliol's rival, started up in Wallace's place. Edward was thunderstruck to learn that Bruce and his friends had murdered Comyn, one of his regents, in a church at Dumfries, and that Bruce had been crowned at Scone.

Although Bruce was a king, he was a king without a kingdom or any army. His few followers were scattered in the battle of Methven, and Bruce had to flee to the Highlands. Even some of his countrymen sought his blood; the Lord of Lorn, a relation of Comyn, desired to avenge his murdered kinsman. Bruce, however, had great personal strength and good friends, chief of whom was Sir James Douglas, "the good Lord James". Still, so desperate were his fortunes that he had for a time to take refuge in the lonely island of Rathlin, near the Irish coast.

After a while he landed in Ayrshire, and fought numbers of small battles with the English forces. Often he was nearly captured or killed, but this continuous warfare taught his men to become good soldiers. One stroke of fortune befell Bruce, and that was the death of his old enemy, Edward I, while marching northward to invade Scotland again. Even had Edward lived he could not have won in the end. He might have beaten Bruce, but he could not have conquered the Scottish nation and kept it down by force of arms. His plans, good as they were, had completely failed. He had wished to unite Scotland and England; all he had done was to divide them more deeply than they had ever been divided before. When

Robert
the Bruce,
1306-29.

Guerilla
Warfare.

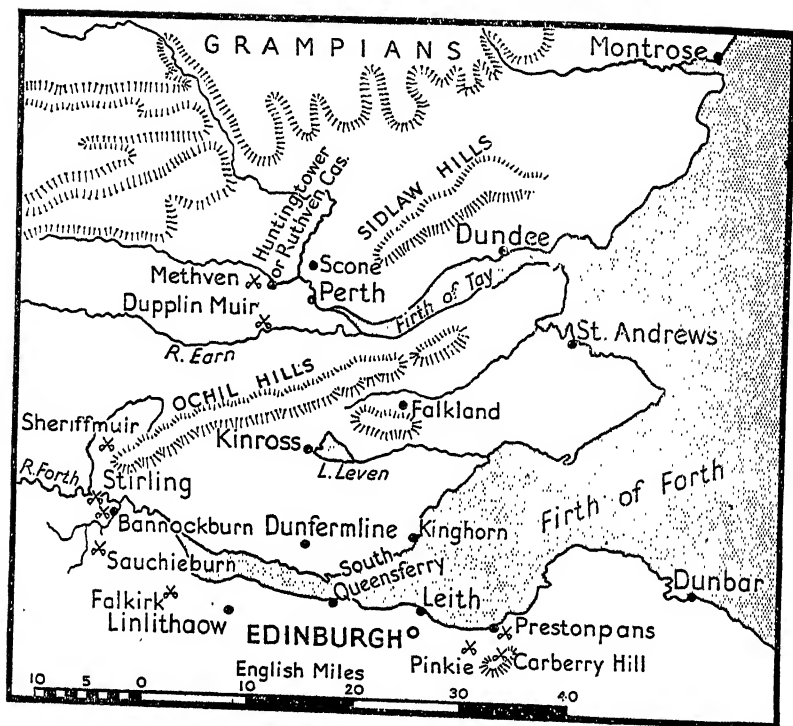
the old " Hammer of the Scots " was gone, Bruce soon found his son, Edward II, to be a feeble foe. His armies were badly led, his plans badly made.

Though the Scottish prelates knew that Bruce had been excommunicated by the Pope for the murder of Comyn, they met in Dundee in 1310 and declared that Bruce was their lawful sovereign; they would support him and none other. One by one the castles in Scotland were wrested from English hands. Bunnock seized Linlithgow by jamming a wagon of hay in the gateway, so that the gates could not be closed; Douglas surprised Roxburgh; Randolph captured Edinburgh Castle by leading a body of daring men up the Castle Rock in the dark.

One important fortress, Stirling Castle, still held out. In 1314 Edward II led a huge army northwards to relieve it. Bruce with far smaller forces determined to give battle. It was daring, for the English were at least two to one, but Bruce's men were now fine soldiers, confident and experienced. The armies met at Bannockburn.

**Battle of
Bannock-
burn, 1314.**

Bruce's front was defended both by the burn and by pitfalls which he had ordered his men to dig to check the advance of the English cavalry. The English, however, avoided the pits, crossed the burn, and so outflanked the small Scottish army. But Edward had thrown away the advantage that his numbers gave him; he had led his troops into a position in which they had no room to manœuvre. Bruce, instead of waiting to be attacked, hurled his spearmen against the confused and crowded masses of the English cavalry; when the dreaded English archers came forward and began to shoot, he scattered them by sending his own cavalry among them. The English soon saw that they were fighting against men who were determined to conquer or die; men who were burning to set their country free, who were fighting to protect their



CENTRAL SCOTLAND

homes, their wives and children, and to pay back the terrible wrongs they had suffered. The English were beginning to waver, and the Scots pressed on more fiercely, crying, "On them, on them; they fail," when a body of Scottish camp-followers were seen pouring down from the Gillies Hill. They seemed to be a fresh Scottish force, arriving to support their comrades. The English lost heart, though many fought to the end. The Scots were completely victorious.

Bannockburn decided the question once for all. England could not conquer Scotland. But Edward II, too

feeble to conduct a war properly, was too obstinate to yield. Through his reign the war went on. It was now the turn of the Scots. Bruce led his armies over the border, and pillaged the north of England. Edward could do little to check him. Indeed he could not keep his own barons in order; it was vain for him to hope to subdue the Scots.

Scots
invade
England.

Tired of him and his favourites, the English barons rebelled; Parliament declared him deposed, and Edward III was put on the throne. He began to make war against the Scots with vigour, but he could gain no advantage over the invading Scottish army. He encamped opposite it, but its position was so strong that he dared not attack, and he himself was nearly slain. James Douglas led a night raid into the English camp, and actually got as far as the royal tent before he was driven back. Then the Scots retreated in the night, leaving their camp-fires burning, so that the English did not perceive their going, and Edward was left with no enemy to fight.

Edward
III, 1327-77.

He saw that it was useless to go on. In 1328, by the Treaty of Northampton, in which Bruce was recognized as lawful King of Scotland, and the King of England gave up all his claims, peace was made between the two nations.

Treaty of
North-
ampton,
1328.

Robert the Bruce's reign ended in 1329. For Scotland it was a memorable reign. Before its close he had obtained a mastery of all his foes at home and abroad. He had established the alliance between Scotland and France which was to lead to so much. He had secured from the Pope not only the removal of the sentence of excommunication, but the privilege for his successors of being anointed at their coronation, like the Kings of England and France. He had freed Scotland from the foreign invader. He had united it as it had never been united before. All alike were ready to obey him. The barons,

many of whom were Anglo-Norman in descent and hitherto half-English in feeling, had become good Scotsmen and good patriots, ready, in their own words, "to fight for liberty, which no good man loses but with his life". In the fire of national trouble there had been welded a nation, firm, self-reliant, confident, proud of its race and of its king.

CHAPTER 12

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

The Hundred Years' War is the name given to the long struggle between England and France, from 1338 to 1453—roughly speaking, a hundred years. It began when Edward III, provoked by the help given by Philip VI to the Scots, by his attempts to make himself master of the English possessions in South-western France, and by his interference in the affairs of Flanders—interference which threatened to ruin the all-important wool trade—decided to enforce his claim to the crown of France. His mother was a daughter of Philip IV, whose three sons had in succession ruled over France, but when in 1328 the last of these short-lived monarchs, Charles IV, died childless, Edward was passed over, and the crown given to Philip VI, whose father, Charles of Valois, was the younger brother of Philip IV. War indeed did not go on all the time. There were truces now and again. But, speaking generally, for a hundred years England and France were enemies. In following this long period of history, which covers the reigns of five English kings, we shall find it convenient to fix in our minds some landmarks.

The war may be divided into two periods of great

success and two periods of failure. The first period of success lies in the early part of Edward III's reign. We have the battles of Crécy and Poitiers, and the Treaty of Brétigny, in which the French king admitted the English claim to the south-west of France; this was followed by a time of failure in the latter part of Edward III's reign and that of Richard II. The second period of success began with Henry V. He outdid the glory of Crécy and Poitiers by his victory of Agincourt; he married the King of France's daughter and was called his heir; his infant son, Henry VI, was crowned King of France. But then came the second period of failure. By degrees all was lost that had been won, till in 1453 nothing was left to England save Calais.

Divisions
in the
Hundred
Years'
War.

Edward III and Henry V were both victorious in their battles; they both claimed the title of King of France, though neither had any right to it; they both ruled large possessions in France; in both cases these dominions were at last recaptured by the French.

Our first task is to see why the English won the great battles. It seems very strange, that at Crécy and Poitiers the French were two to one, at Agincourt four to one, and yet they were hopelessly beaten in all three battles. Let us look more closely at the story of these battles.

Crécy was fought in 1346. Edward III was retreating towards Calais after an unsuccessful march on Paris. He was overtaken by the French, who numbered 60,000 men to his 30,000. He drew up his army with the archers in front and his knights, dismounted, behind. The shower of arrows first destroyed the crossbowmen in the French force; no wonder, for the English archer could shoot six arrows to his opponent's one. We are told "they shot so fast and so thick that it seemed as if it were snowing". Then the French knights charged, but the horsemen went down under the English arrows so

Crécy,
1346.

fast that only a very few reached the English line, and they were easily beaten off. And when this had gone on for most of the day the remains of the French army fled. Edward III, who commanded the English reserve, had not struck a blow.

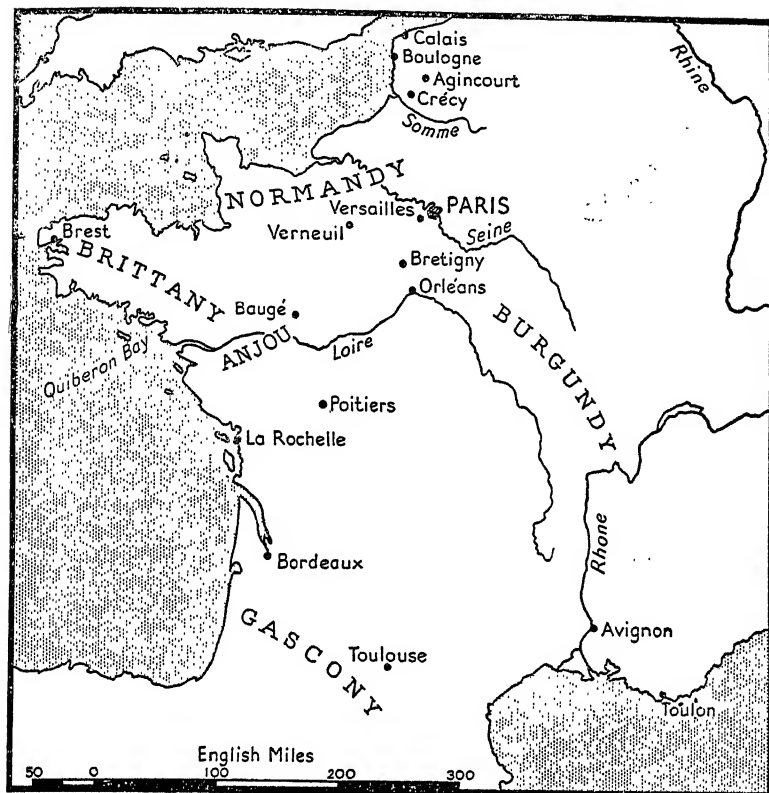
Poitiers, 1356. The hero of Poitiers was Edward's son, the Black Prince. He had been raiding in France, but found his return cut off by 15,000 French soldiers under King John. He had only 7000 men with him, 3000 of whom were archers. He drew up his small force behind hedges and awaited the French onset. This time most of the French attacked on foot, but met no better success than at Crécy. The archers kept up a steady discharge; the French ranks were broken ere they reached the hedges; they came on bravely, but the English slew them as they came through the gaps. One division of the French army retreating threw the next into disorder. Meanwhile the arrows poured down like hail, and the English bowmen, who drew their bowstrings to their ears, sent their shafts with force enough to pierce any but the best armour. At the end of the day the Black Prince led his own men to charge the last division of the French army in front, while a small body of horse was sent round to take it in the rear. The French gave way in all directions; the French king himself was captured; and the English, with a loss of 300 men, found they had killed and captured almost as many Frenchmen as there were men in their own army.

Agincourt, 1415. The story of Agincourt begins like that of Crécy. Henry V was making for Calais. The French barred his way. 13,000 Englishmen, worn out by long marches, had to face 50,000 fresh and well-equipped Frenchmen. Henry placed some of his archers in front, and sent others to line the woods which covered the flanks of his small force on either side. The French had to advance across a muddy ploughland a mile in length. So heavy were the

tatis: qui fingis laborem in precepto.
 Captabunt in animam iusti: san-
 guinem innocentem condemnabit.



IV. AGRICULTURE IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY
 (See Note on p. xiv)



FRANCE DURING THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

men in armour, and so sticky the mud, that as a body they never reached the English at all. A few managed to crawl up, but the great mass stuck, a splendid mark for the English archers. When it had been well riddled, the English charged. Being lightly armed and without armour, they could move freely where the enemy could not; and thus first the French vanguard, and then the main line, were overthrown and butchered, the dead

actually lying two or three deep. The third division of the French army fled; it was too terrified to stand an attack, though it alone far outnumbered Henry's entire force.

The English Archers. One fact stands out in all the battles. The English archers decided them. Not only could they shoot farther and faster than any crossbowmen, or French archers, but when properly backed they could stop heavy cavalry. The day of the knights in armour was over. Their charges, hitherto thought irresistible, could be broken by archers and steady infantry. The best missile weapons won. The same fact has been shown over and over again in the history of war. Just as the longbow beat the crossbow, so the musket beat the bow, the rifle replaced the smooth bore, the breech-loader triumphed over the muzzle-loader, and the magazine-rifle and the machine-gun held the field, with increased range and rapidity of fire, till they in their turn were knocked out by the big long-range gun, firing shells charged with high explosive.

Reasons for English Failure. Yet although England could beat the French in pitched battles, they were not numerous enough to hold the country. They could overrun it; the Duke of Lancaster could march across the south of France, and none dared meet him in battle. Yet when the French remained in their walled towns they were safe. In days when artillery was scarcely used, and was very cumbrous and short in range, sieges were long affairs, needing many men and costing many lives. Thus when the French had learned wisdom; when they risked no pitched battles, but fought behind walls; when they kept up a continual warfare on small parties, the English power drooped. Bit by bit Bertrand du Guesclin regained all that had been lost. When Edward III died the English possessions had dwindled down to Bordeaux, a strip of Gascony, and Calais; in Richard II's reign the French even in-

vaded England. They plundered the Isle of Wight, and for a time a French force was encamped in Sussex.

Henry V, we have seen, was more startlingly successful than Edward III at his best, for his son was proclaimed King of France at Paris. Still, he had a much easier task. The French king, Charles VI, was little better than a madman. France itself was not united; it was divided up into two great parties, the Burgundians, headed by their duke, and the Orleanists or Armagnacs. So fierce were these factions against each other that they even descended to murder. First a Duke of Orléans, and then a Duke of Burgundy, was treacherously slain by the other side. In the end the Burgundians, sooner than see the Armagnacs triumph, allied themselves with Henry V. Thus it is not England alone fighting against France. It is England, in alliance with one half of France, fighting against the other.

French
Disunity.

Henry V's success, then, depended much on the Burgundian alliance. He was strong because France was divided. But this could not last. Nothing, in fact, unites a country so speedily as foreign invasion. We have seen this already in Scotland. We may observe it again in France. By degrees Burgundians and Armagnacs came to see that they were both Frenchmen, to whom England was a deadly foe. The first in a long series of English defeats, that of Bauge, in 1421, was achieved mainly by a body of Scots. Here was one result of that alliance which lasted so long between England's two enemies. Pope Martin V, hearing of the share of the Scots in the victory, observed, "Truly the Scots are a cure for the English". But France was not to be saved by the Scots; when their allies were cut to pieces at Verneuil the French began to realize that they could be saved only by their own efforts.

The Turn
of the
Tide.

The task of rousing the French spirit fell to Jeanne

Jeanne d'Arc. d'Arc, commonly called in England Joan of Arc. She was a simple peasant girl, who believed that she was sent by heaven to drive the English from France. Dressed as a soldier in white armour, she led the French soldiers to the attack. In 1429 she entered Orléans, and drove off the English who were besieging it; then she won battle after battle. The English declared that they could not beat her. This was true, for she was backed by France growing united again. Even after Joan had been taken prisoner, and cruelly burned as a witch by the English, things went from bad to worse with our armies. A few years later the Burgundians abandoned the English alliance. The French had discovered, too, that the cannon could beat the long-bow. One English stronghold after another was battered into submission by the French artillery. That the day of the archer was over was proved at Castillon in 1453, when the veteran Talbot and his army were overwhelmed by the enemy cannonade. With the surrender of Bordeaux a few weeks later English power in France vanished for the last time. Of all the vast possessions of the English kings, only Calais remained.

The Hundred Years' War practically brings to an end English efforts to gain territory on the Continent. That object abandoned, we shall see England turn to a new plan, namely, that of spreading her power at sea and in the New World. Before, however, she had the opportunity to do this, she had to pass through a period of trouble at home, which was something like the trouble that she had profited by in France. She was torn to pieces by bloody wars for the crown. Fortunately, no foreign invader came to England to make matters worse, as Henry V had come to France.

CHAPTER 13

THE BLACK DEATH AND THE PEASANTS

We have seen that the Norman Conquest left the class who cultivated the land in the position of serfs. They were bound to the land, and had to give their lord so many days' work each week, and certain extra days' work at the busy seasons of hay-making, harvest, and ploughing. As time went on, however, many of these villeins had come to an arrangement with their lords to pay money instead of service; for example, if a man's labour was reckoned at a penny a day he would pay three-pence a week if he had owed three days' work, and further pennies for extra days. The plan was convenient for both parties: the villein got more time to work on his own plot of land; the lord got money with which he could hire labourers and was saved the trouble of continually striving to compel unwilling or lazy villeins to perform their services.

Commuta-
tion of
Service.

This plan of "commuting" services for money was spreading gradually over the country, but it was not complete, when it was interrupted by a disaster. This was the Black Death, a fearful plague which ravaged our island from 1347 to 1350. At least one-third of the whole population perished. It is literally true that often the living could scarce bury the dead; for example, more than one case occurred where all the inhabitants of a monastery were cut off, or every member of a large family died, so that there was none left to inherit the land.

The Black
Death.

We have especially to look at the effects of this in the rural districts. It is plain that labour would become very

Rise in
Wages.

hard to get; and, further, since at the height of the plague men were so terrified that they left the harvest to rot ungathered in the fields, corn became scarce. This caused a rise in prices; and as prices rose, and labourers were few, we should be prepared to find a rise in wages also. In fact, this is what happened. Wages rose sharply.

Difficulties
of the
Land-
owners.

This all hit the landowners hard. To begin with, many of their tenants were dead, some without leaving heirs; and so they lost the payments for commuted service which these had owed. Further, what had paid for a day's labour in the days before the Black Death would no longer pay it after the rise in wages. It was a common complaint that whereas a woman's labour had cost $\frac{1}{2}d.$ a day, now it cost $2d.$ or $3d.$ Hence ruin stared the lord in the face if he had to receive at the old rates and pay at the new ones.

Something clearly had to be done; and as the landowners were strong in Parliament, we shall find their policy if we trace what Parliament did. The first idea was to check this rise in wages, which seemed to them ruinous. No injustice was intended, because Parliament meant to check the rise in prices also; if prices remained the same, it was argued, there was no need for wages to rise. There was nothing new in this idea of regulating wages and prices. Every trade had its craft guild, which fixed the price at which its wares should be sold. Parliament was only attempting to do for the country what the craft guilds did in the towns.

Statutes of
Labourers.

The task, however, was too big. Parliament made a series of laws called the Statutes of Labourers, by which all labourers were ordered to take the old rate of wages, under pain of imprisonment, branding with a hot iron, slavery, and even death. But even these ferocious penalties could not make men obey the laws. The rise in prices went on: men could not live on the old wages;

and yet lords could not afford to see their estates uncultivated. Thus many lords were tempted to break the very laws that were intended to protect them, by offering the higher wages which Parliament had prohibited.

The policy of trying to put the clock back failed; it was bound to fail. Yet a party of the landowners, untaught by their first failure, tried to go still farther back. Wages, they felt, were at the root of the trouble; but there had been a time when no wages were paid or needed, when all paid services, and the land was cultivated by villeins. Why not revive this? It seemed easy; all that was needed was to refuse the commutation payments, and make the villeins pay services once more.

Revival of
Serfdom.

This policy was worse than the other. Men who have partly gained freedom will not consent to lose what they have won. Soon all the peasants were infuriated with the lords. A poll-tax which pressed far more on the poor than it did on the rich caused their smouldering discontent to break into flame. In 1381 risings broke out in East Anglia and in all the counties near London. The Kentish peasants, with Wat Tyler as leader, reached London. Richard II met them boldly at Smithfield. There was need of courage, for the city was in the hands of the mob, and the day before, rioters, pouring into the Tower of London, had murdered the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Treasurer, who had proposed the hateful poll-tax. As Wat Tyler approached, the Mayor of London, thinking he meant to insult and perhaps attack the king, cut him down. The mob were bending their bows to fire on the royal party, when Richard rode forward and cried to them, "I will be your leader", and by fair words and promises got them to disperse quietly. These promises were not kept. The rioters, by burning manor-houses to destroy the records of the serfdom, and hanging lawyers as being the persons who made these deeds,

Peasant
Revolt.

and generally acting in a brutal way, made it impossible to treat them mildly. So the king employed force, and put down the Peasant Revolt with great severity.

Thus injustice, as it often does, had led to violence, which left the wrong unrighted. In many cases the lords were still able to force their serfs to pay services; many rioters were hanged, and the rebels did not get the abolition of serfdom which they had demanded.

Since labour could not be obtained at the old rates, nor services re-exacted without danger of violence and murder, it was necessary to pay the new rates, or to do with less labour. Some lords granted land on lease to tenants for a rent, giving them stock as well as land. Thus the tenant had to find the labour; the lord was free of the difficulty. Here we have the beginnings of the modern farmer, a person who stands between the labourer and the landowner. Others, however, met the difficulty in another way. There was a great demand at the time for wool, and English wool was then the best that could be had. So, in some parts of the country, the great landed proprietors started sheep-farming instead of arable farming. It paid better, because less labour was needed. Many labourers were required for a large arable farm; but when it was laid down in grass one or two shepherds could tend all the sheep on it.

Land Let
on Lease.

Sheep-
farming.

Thus sheep-farming led to many men being out of employment; and as under the old system the villeins' small patches of land were often mixed up with the wide farms of the landowner, now the latter came to wish to evict the villeins and take their land for sheep-farms. He enclosed also the waste or common land on which the villeins had pastured their cattle, and this, too, made it hard for the villeins to keep their holdings. Thus the landowners who had at first struggled to keep their villeins, ended by trying to drive them off altogether.

No doubt great misery was often caused by this depopulation. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries Parliament tried to stop this process of enclosure for sheep-farms, but without much result.

Thus in the end the Black Death helped to make serfdom disappear. By the time of Elizabeth it was at an end. But it was not that the peasants obtained freedom by their revolt. For the time the revolt only made their chains tighter. Yet very soon the labour of villeins came to be no longer required; and lords granted freedom easily, since serfdom was no longer worth keeping.

CHAPTER 14

WYCLIF AND THE LOLLARDS

More than a hundred years before Martin Luther began his dispute with the Roman Church which ended in the Reformation, England had seen a churchman start on a very similar career. The story of John Wyclif and his followers, the Lollards, is the story of an attempt to dispense with the authority of the Pope long before the time came when the nation broke away from the Roman authority, and the Church of England became national and Protestant.

The interference of the Pope in English affairs, even when this interference was only in affairs of the Church, had often been disliked. In Edward III's reign this feeling of dislike became very strong. Men saw a great deal of money being sent to Rome as taxes, and they did not think it right that they should pay it; they saw, too, a great many foreigners who were appointed by the Pope holding rich livings, deaneries, and high posts in the

Desire for
Reform.

Church, and they would have preferred that Englishmen should have these posts. They saw a few churchmen, each holding many livings, and perhaps never going near some of them, and they contrasted the fine clothes and crowds of servants of these men with the poverty of the parish priests. It seemed to them that these rich churchmen neglected their duty, and thought more of the good things of this world than it was right for them to do. "God," they said, "gave His people to be pastured, not to be shaven and shorn." And so the idea got about that some change and reform was needed. We must not think that all, or even the greater part of the churchmen in England were negligent or careless; there were many then, as there have always been, bent on doing their duty to the utmost. Unfortunately it was not for the most part these men who were placed in high positions.

The Friars. Besides the ordinary clergy there was in England a large number of friars. These were quite different from the monks, who stayed in their monasteries. The friars, who mostly belonged to either the Dominican or the Franciscan order, went among the people. St. Dominic, who founded the Dominican order, had sent his friars to preach and to convert those who believed wrongly or were careless about religion. St. Francis bade his order show by the example of a pure and simple life, and charitable acts, what the followers of Christ should do. Both Black and Grey Friars, as they were called from their dresses, were to copy the poverty of our Lord, and to live and teach amongst the poor. They were not allowed at first to have any property at all.

These orders began well, and when they first came to England, in the reign of Henry III, they did a great deal of good. But unfortunately they did not always keep to their simplicity and vows of poverty. Some grew rich

and some grew lazy; and many deserted the habitations of the poor, going instead among the rich, or to the universities, where they became great scholars and teachers, but not teachers of the simple message of Christ to ordinary folk. And those who remained scattered over the country were obedient only to the Pope; they were not obliged to obey English bishops, and they often interfered with the parish priests, which was naturally resented.

All these things helped to rouse a feeling of hostility to the clergy, and sometimes to the Pope; and to make things worse, the popes themselves at this time had fallen on evil days. First of all, they had been unwise enough to leave Rome (1309) and live at Avignon in France, and so they fell much into the power of the kings of France. Englishmen at this time hated France, with whom they were carrying on a prolonged war, and were consequently disposed to be prejudiced against what they regarded as French popes. Then in 1378 began the Great Schism, when there was one pope at Rome and another at Avignon, each claiming to be Christ's vicar on earth. This division went on for forty years, and while some people obeyed the popes at Avignon and some the popes at Rome, others were inclined to reject both. So altogether the authority of the popes was for the time much diminished.

**The Popes
in Avignon.**

**The Great
Schism.**

John Wyclif, who became the leader of the attack on the faults of the clergy, was a Yorkshireman who had gone to Oxford, where he had become Master of Balliol College. Being a scholar, he looked at matters from a historical point of view. The faults of the Church, he said, came in the main from its pursuit of wealth and power on earth: if it had remained true to the poverty and simplicity of the apostles none of the abuses would have occurred. Thus he found nothing in the Bible to

Wyclif.

justify the payments made to the Pope, called annates and first-fruits, or to excuse the holding of more than one benefice at once (pluralities), or to defend the easy and careless lives which were led by many churchmen. Wyclif was at first helped by John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, who wished to drive the clerics out from the council of King Edward III. Thus when Wyclif was 1277. summoned to St. Paul's to be tried for what he had written, the duke stood beside him to defend him; when Courtenay, Bishop of London, declared that Wyclif was little better than a heretic, the duke threatened to drag Courtenay from the church by the hair of his head. A riot began; the citizens of London rushed in to defend their bishop; and Wyclif nearly lost his life.

Brawling and abuse was not the way to mend matters. Wyclif himself took no part in it. His next steps were more practical. He founded an order of poor preachers, "the Simple Priests", to spread his ideas among the people. He also directly appealed to the people himself by his tracts, which he wrote, not in Latin, the language hitherto used for all religious discussion, but in homely, plain, forcible English, which all could understand. And finally, Wyclif, with the help of his disciples, translated the Bible from Latin into English, so that it should no longer be the property of scholars, but open to all to read for themselves, or aloud to their friends who were too ignorant to read.

Trans-
lation of
the Bible.

For a time Wyclif's followers, the Lollards, increased fast in numbers. It was said that if you saw five men talking together, three were Lollards. But in the later years of Richard II the Church began to take vigorous measures to root out their heresy. And when Henry IV, who owed his position on the throne partly to the support of the Church, became king, the persecution grew fierce.

Thus the beginning of Henry's reign is marked by a statute "for the burning of Heretics", and directly 1401. after a Lollard named William Sawtrey was sent to the stake. In Henry V's reign the Lollards were still numerous enough to threaten a rebellion. They were protected and encouraged by Sir John Oldcastle, a brave soldier who had fought well in Henry IV's wars against the Welsh. He was arrested and sentenced to be burnt, but he escaped. A plot was formed for a great mass of Lollards to meet in St. Giles's fields, and to seize the king. The plot was discovered, and the king, by closing the gates of London and sending a body of horse to the meeting-place, prevented an outbreak. Oldcastle was at last recaptured and burned as a heretic. After this we hear little more of the Lollards, although in a few villages Lollardy lingered on till the time of the Reformation.

Lollard
Rising.

The movement was on the whole a failure, because the Lollards had nothing definite to propose. They were united in complaining about the wealth and luxury of great churchmen, but in little else. Some followed Wyclif's later opinions, and became actually heretics; that is to say, they denied some of the teachings of the Church, and wanted a reform in doctrine. But the people at large had not the least wish for this; they regarded it as going much too far. In two points, however, Wyclif's life is memorable. He gave us our first Bible in English, and he also taught the right of all, clergy and laity alike, to form their ideas of conduct on what they found in the Bible, without being obliged to follow what they were told to believe.

CHAPTER 15

THE WARS OF THE ROSES

Disputes
about the
Succession;
Lancaster
and York.

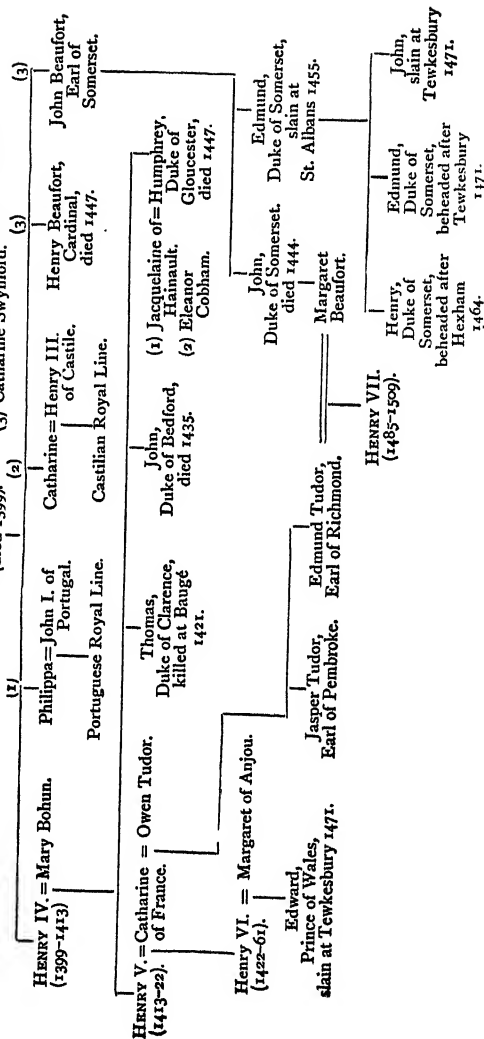
We have already seen the evils of a dispute over the rightful heir to the throne in Scotland, and in France. We have now to observe them in England. Edward III's eldest son, the Black Prince, died before his father, but he left a son who became Richard II. Richard II had no children; he made many enemies, and his cousin, Henry of Lancaster, the son of King Edward's third son, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, deposed him and became king as Henry IV. Unfortunately there were other cousins descended also from two other sons of Edward III, Lionel, Duke of Clarence, and Edmund, Duke of York. Since Clarence was the second son of Edward III, there was always a doubt if the house of Lancaster had the best right to the crown. And at last a descendant of York married a descendant of Clarence, and the child of that marriage, Richard of York, began the Wars of the Roses to turn the Lancastrian king, Henry VI, off the throne.

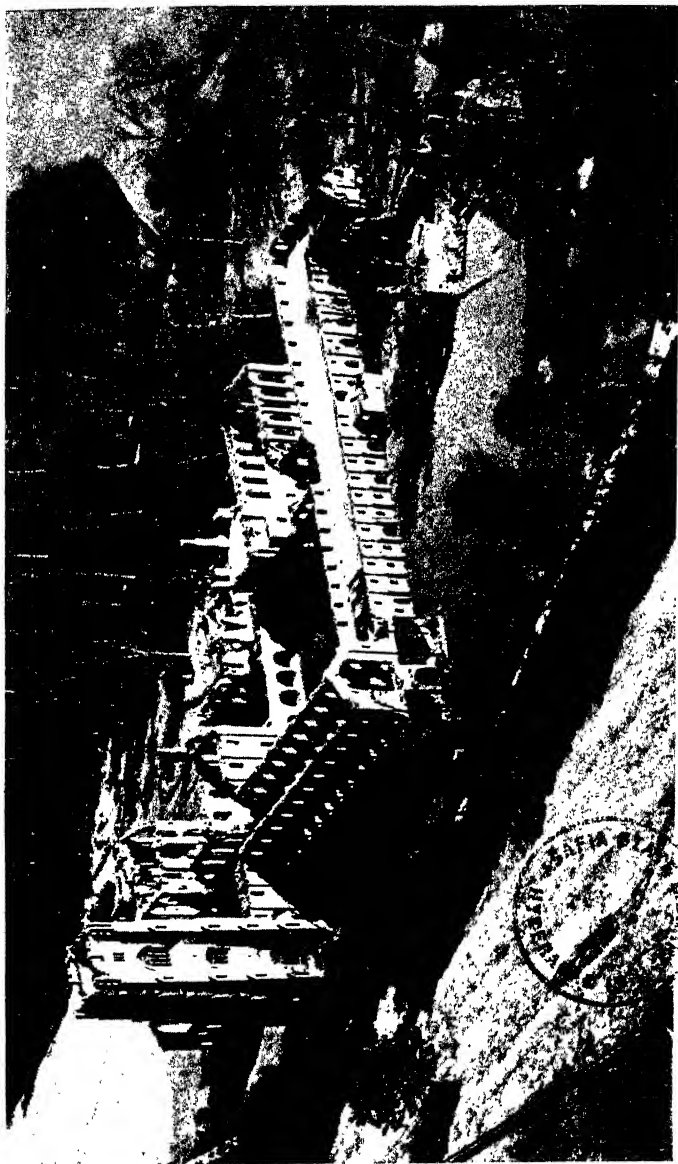
Had Henry VI been as strong a king as his father Henry V, or his grandfather Henry IV, he would have had little to fear. People and Parliament had accepted him, because his father had been king before him, without paying attention "to the fault *his* father made in compassing the crown". But Henry VI, though very good and pious, was weak; and in his later years he went mad. During all his reign, too, everything went wrong at home and abroad. Many people, therefore, thought it would be better to have a strong man like Richard of York as king.

THE RED ROSE.

EDWARD III.
(1327-77).

John of Gaunt, = (1) Blanche of Lancaster.
Duke of Lancaster (2) Constance, daughter of Pedro the Cruel.
(died 1399). (3) Catharine Swynford.





V. FOUNTAINS ABBEY, YORKSHIRE

(See Note on p. xiv)



It is needless for us to follow the course of the Wars of the Roses. A few main points are all we require. After five years of civil war Henry VI was deposed in 1461, and Edward IV, the head of the Yorkists, was made king in his place. Edward had great difficulty in keeping the throne; indeed he was once driven from the kingdom and Henry VI set up again. But in 1471 Edward got back his power by hard fighting. His son, Edward V, a boy of thirteen, was deposed and murdered by his uncle, Richard of Gloucester, who made himself Richard III. After a reign of two years he was killed in battle, and the Lancastrian line was restored by Henry Tudor, Henry VII, whose father had married a descendant of John of Gaunt. He wisely married the heiress of the house of York, and so brought the struggle to an end (1485).

What we have to remark is, not the changes of kings, but the effect of the rivalry between the Red Rose of Lancaster and the White Rose of York upon England. To begin with, we have thirty years of civil war, from the first battle of St. Albans in 1455 to the battle of Bosworth in 1485 when Richard III was killed. During this time scarcely anyone cared for the law. The House of Commons was too weak to make men obey it; the Lords were all fighting on one side or the other. Thus we have some of the ill days of King Stephen over again. The barons kept armies of their own, consisting of retainers, as their men were called, who wore the crest of their lord and fought for him. Thus Warwick's men all wore the crest of the bear and the ragged staff, Holland's men the cresset, and Montagu's the dun bull. It is easy to understand that nobles with armies at their back did not care for the law. If a jury gave a verdict against them, the jurors were set on and beaten, perhaps even murdered. If a noble had a grudge against anyone, he would lead his

Thirty
Years of
Civil War
and Law-
lessness.



ENGLAND : 1327-1485

men to besiege and plunder his enemy's house. In fact, throughout all England Might became Right.

There were worse features in the Wars of the Roses than the disregard of law. We are accustomed to think of Britons fighting honestly, that is to say, choosing a side and sticking to it; and we expect that whatever happens they will give quarter to those who surrender, and will not kill their prisoners. Unfortunately, neither of these beliefs is true of the Wars of the Roses. Never, indeed, was there more treachery, and more cruelty towards prisoners.

What, for example, could be more treacherous than the conduct of Lord Grey de Ruthyn at Northampton Treachery. in 1460, when, instead of defending the Lancastrian lines, he and his men assisted the Yorkists to mount over the rampart raised to keep them out. But this does not stand alone. Warwick the Kingmaker fought first for the Yorkists, and was at last killed while fighting for the Lancastrians at Barnet in 1471. The battle of Bosworth was decided by Stanley's troops deserting Richard III and going over to the Lancastrian side in the midst of the battle. And what can exceed the treachery of Edward IV's brother, George of Clarence, that prince who we are told came to his end by being drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine? He betrayed his brother to Warwick, then betrayed Warwick to his brother. Rightly does Shakespeare call him—

“ False, fleeting, perjured Clarence.”

The war, too, is thick with examples of cruelty. Every battle was followed by executions of the prisoners. Tip- Cruelty. toft, the Yorkist Earl of Worcester, a man of scholarship and refinement, to whom one might imagine brutality to be odious, yet earned the nickname of the Great Butcher of England by the joy he took in having his cap-

tured foes executed. When at last he himself was beheaded England rejoiced. When the Lancastrians won Wakefield fight, Clifford and the queen, Margaret of Anjou, who led them, caused the head of Richard of York, who had fallen in the battle, to be cut off and placed on the gates of York, crowned with a paper crown, in mockery of his claims to the throne. After the second battle of St. Albans, in 1461, two Yorkist prisoners were brought before Henry VI's young son, Edward, then seven years old. The queen, his mother, bade him choose what death they should die. The boy answered, "Let them have their heads taken off". A few years later, in 1471, this same bloodthirsty youngster was stabbed at Tewkesbury, while fleeing, by Richard of Gloucester.

This man sums up all that is worst in the age. He
Richard III. has gone down to all time as the ruthless Richard Crookback, who murdered the young princes in the Tower. They were his brother Edward IV's children; they had been placed in his care; but they stood between him and the throne, and that was enough. They were both strangled at his orders by two ruffians employed by Sir James Tyrrell.

If Richard Crookback—Richard III of England—
Margaret of Anjou. is the worst of the Yorkists, he is matched in savagery by a woman, the Lancastrian queen, Margaret of Anjou. Her deeds at Wakefield and St. Albans have been already told. She was not an Englishwoman; we may be glad of it. It is true that she was brave and vigorous. She has sometimes won sympathy as the injured queen fighting for her husband, and as the mother who, when fleeing from a battle with her son, saved him from a marauder by saying boldly, "This is the son of your king"; but sympathy is wasted on her. She was as fierce as any lawless baron, and in treachery to the nation she outdid them all. It was she who urged the French in time of

peace, and when her own husband was on the throne, to attack, burn, and plunder the town of Sandwich, which she knew would be undefended, because she thought that the disaster would make people blame the Duke of York, who was regent.

One other person remains for us to notice—Richard Neville, the great Earl of Warwick and Salisbury. No noble had ever been so powerful as he; none has ever been so powerful again. His lands lay in almost every shire in England. In the midlands and in Wales whole counties regarded him as more their master than they did the king. He had many castles, and hosts of retainers. He it was who put Edward IV on the throne: when in later years Edward offended him, Warwick drove him from the kingdom, allied himself with Lancastrians, and restored King Henry VI. Thus he got the title of the “Kingmaker”, for it seemed that he could make and unmake kings by his word. Edward IV was never secure on his throne till he had beaten his former friend at Barnet, where, as was usual in those days, when all wore heavy armour, Warwick was too much encumbered to escape, and was cut down in the pursuit.

Warwick
the King-
maker.

It was then the great barons who made the wars. They also suffered in them. When the Wars of the Roses came to an end, there were only a few barons left. They had perished in battle or under the headsman's axe; and many had left no heirs. At first the people of England as a mass cared little for either Lancaster or York. By degrees they came to hate both alike, and they determined to put a stop to such struggles for ever. The only cure, they saw, was the old cure, namely, to make the king so strong that no barons could stand against him. Hence we shall find the Tudor kings, who begin with Henry VII, very powerful and stern rulers. They are sometimes called despots, by which we mean kings who

Destruction of the
Baronage.

rule without deferring to the will of Parliament. It is true that the Tudors were despots; but they were so because the nation had made them so, and because Parliament was willing to follow where they led. England had no wish to have the Wars of the Roses over again.

CHAPTER 16

THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND: FIRST PERIOD

Henry VII; time was spent in crushing the last embers of the Wars
Marriages of his Children. of the Roses. Thus he refused to allow the nobles to keep retainers who wore their lord's livery and fought for him as soldiers. To strengthen his position he collected a great hoard of money. He also tried to make himself more powerful by marrying his children to foreign princes and princesses. He gave his daughter to be the wife of James IV of Scotland: we shall see the result of this by and by. He also married his elder son, Arthur, to a Spanish princess, Catharine of Aragon, who, when her husband died, married his younger brother, Henry. This also was one of the most important marriages ever made by an English king.

Henry VIII, 1509-47. The first part of Henry VIII's reign was occupied with foreign politics. We need not try to follow all that Henry did, but we must remember the chief outlines, for foreign politics led to the most memorable event of the reign; the Reformation.

There were two great rivals in Europe at this time, the King of France and the King of Spain. The latter, Charles V, was, however, much more than King of

Spain as we know it. He was ruler over the Low Countries (Holland and Belgium), and of part of Italy. He had also been elected Emperor, that is to say, he was lord of Germany: and besides this, he was master of the riches of the New World, in consequence of the discoveries of Christopher Columbus, who had been employed by the Spanish government, and had sailed across the Atlantic to America in 1492. Between these two rivals Henry VIII steered a middle course. His great minister, Cardinal Wolsey, thought that England could reap most advantage by making the rivals bid against each other for the aid of England. The result, however, was that both came to distrust and despise England. And so Wolsey, who hoped to be made pope, and trusted to the Emperor to help him, found that Charles V preferred to help someone who was a more faithful friend. Twice Wolsey was disappointed in his ambitions.

Rivalry of
France and
Spain;
Wolsey.

Meanwhile Henry had grown tired of his Spanish wife. She had borne him a daughter, but no son, and Henry wanted a male heir to the throne. Besides, he had fallen in love with Anne Boleyn. So he wished to be freed from Catharine: for this purpose application had to be made to the Pope, and the king entrusted the business to Wolsey. Henry did not expect to have much trouble in getting the Pope to declare that, as Catharine had been married previously to his brother, Arthur, the marriage had never been a true marriage.

Henry,
Wolsey,
and the
Pope.

However, the unexpected came to pass. The Pope, Clement VII, did not wish to offend Wolsey and Henry VIII, but he feared to offend the Emperor, who had a big army in Italy, a great deal more. The Pope was in a difficult position, but the decision was in the hands of the Papal Court, which was not influenced by political considerations. Henry did not get his way: his marriage was not declared to be invalid. But he was a headstrong

man who could not bear to be thwarted. So he threw Wolsey into disgrace for his failure, and he quarrelled with the Pope.

Now it happened that at this time it was easy to find grounds for a quarrel. Religion had become too largely a matter of forms and ceremonies merely. Even in the highest places in the Church there were some who led evil lives, and had no real faith in what they taught. Many faithful sons of the Church thought that these things should not be, and a German monk named Martin Luther was led to believe a complete change was needed. In 1517 he "protested" against certain practices of the Church, and his followers, the first Protestants, converted a great part of Germany to agree with them and to cast off the authority of Rome, which meant casting themselves out of the Church.

Henry might therefore have left the Roman Catholic Church and become a Protestant. But this was not what he wished. The Pope, he argued, refused to free him from his marriage. Very good, he would break free from the Pope; he would get rid of Catharine through his own courts; but he had no desire to change his beliefs as the Protestants were doing. He intended to believe what he had always believed, but he would not be controlled by the Pope.

In this many people were ready to follow him. Wyclif and the Lollards had felt the same more than a hundred years before, and the feeling of hostility had grown stronger with time. Consequently, the Parliament which met in 1529, and is generally called the Reformation Parliament, backed up Henry in his schemes. First, it declared that all appeals to Rome, and appointments made by the Pope, were illegal; then it ordered that no payments should be made to the Pope; and finally, in 1534, it passed the Act of Supremacy, which said that Henry

Martin
Luther.

Henry
casts off
the Power
of the
Pope.

was head of the Church in England. The link that had bound England to Rome ever since the Synod of Whitby—nearly nine hundred years before—was broken.

Thus Henry became neither a Roman Catholic nor a Protestant. No one could call him the first, for he had defied the Pope, and he beheaded as traitors those Catholics who refused to take the Oath of Supremacy, and acknowledge him as Head of the Church. It was for this reason that Sir Thomas More, the most learned man in England, was put to death. He was no traitor, but a man of stainless honour who could not honestly say that he thought Henry VIII was right. On the other hand, none could imagine Henry to be a Protestant, for he held to all the Roman Catholic doctrines, and commanded his subjects to believe them also, on pain of death. Protestants who wished to follow Martin Luther and reject some of the old beliefs were burnt as heretics. Strange as Henry's position may seem, many of his subjects agreed with him.

Two other events in the course of the Reformation are particularly noteworthy. The first is the dissolution of the monasteries. Monks were hateful to Henry, since many were not under the control of English bishops, but obeyed their own abbots, who were in their turn obedient to the Pope. The monasteries were very rich, and their wealth tempted the king. Finally, the monks were sometimes lazy and sometimes ill-behaved; so that when the king caused an inquiry to be held, enough stories against them were collected to furnish an excuse for the suppression of good and bad alike. Accordingly, in 1536 the smaller monasteries were broken up, and three years later the richer ones suffered the same fate. The king got an immense amount of property by this. Some he kept for himself, but much he gave to his nobles. This made the nobles support the Reformation, for they saw

The
Monas-
teries and
their
Lands.

that if England were ever to return to the Roman Catholic Church, they would have to give up the monastic lands. But the poor suffered; the monasteries had been very charitable to them, and now many could hardly obtain bread. In consequence, we find that Henry VIII and his successors had a great deal of trouble with beggars.

**Trans-
lation of
the Bible.** The other event that was of importance was a fresh translation of the Bible. This was mainly the work of William Tindale and Miles Coverdale. Thomas Cromwell, the king's chief minister, and Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, persuaded the king to allow it. First of all copies were placed in the churches, and afterwards anyone was allowed to keep a Bible in his home. Further, owing to the invention of printing, Bibles became cheaper, and so most men who could read were able to have one, a thing which was not possible in the old days when all books were in manuscript—that is to say, copied out by hand. The result of this was a steady increase in the Protestant party. Luther had taught men to look to the Bible and not to the Pope as the source of what was right to believe, and as soon as Bibles became common, it was likely that there would be more people anxious, not only to set aside the Pope, but also the beliefs of the Roman Church.

**Violence of
the Time.** Henry's reign was a time of great violence. We have seen how he treated Catholics who denied his supremacy, and Protestants who would not believe what he ordered. His ministers found him a dangerous man to serve. Wolsey was disgraced, and died of a broken heart; Thomas Cromwell, who succeeded Wolsey, was beheaded. Henry married six wives; two he divorced, and two were put to death on the scaffold. Nor was his reign free from rebellion. In 1536 there was a rising in the north of those who disliked Henry's changes in religion, led by Robert Aske and the abbots of the great Yorkshire

monasteries; but Henry had the leaders of this "Pilgrimage of Grace", as it was called, arrested and brought to the block. He had begun his reign as a most popular king; towards the end of it he was dreaded. Yet Englishmen went on supporting him.

CHAPTER 17

THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND: SECOND PERIOD

Henry VIII had left three children: Mary, daughter of his first queen, Catharine of Aragon; Elizabeth, daughter of his second queen, Anne Boleyn; and Edward, son of his third queen, Jane Seymour. Although the youngest, the son would in any case have been put before the daughters; further, Parliament had given to Henry the power of arranging the succession as he pleased, and he left the throne to Edward.

Edward VI being only nine years old, the kingdom had to be directed by a regent. This office was placed in the hands of the Duke of Somerset, an ambitious, clever man, but rash and hasty. Urged by Cranmer, he went further than Henry VIII had done in religious matters. He did away with the mass and the Roman Catholic form of service, and in 1549 the first English Prayer Book was issued. He also gave orders that the statues and pictures in the churches should be removed. This was done in a very unseemly way. Some of the men charged to carry out this duty paraded the country, dressed as mock priests in priestly garments, revelling and rioting, and casting the statues and pictures into bonfires, with every sign of contempt. Devout men who had been accustomed

Edward VI.
1547-53.

Changes in
Ritual.

to look on these images while engaged in their prayers, and used since their childhood to think of them as holy, were much pained by behaviour which seemed to them impious. Out-of-the-way country districts were still on the whole Catholic in feeling, and did not favour the ideas of the Reformers, as did London and the large towns. There was a serious rebellion in Devonshire, and another in Norfolk, which were only put down by hard fighting.

Thus Somerset grew unpopular; men blamed him for what he had done, and also for many things for which he was not responsible.

His place was taken by Northumberland, who was a selfish man, only interested in maintaining his own power. He caused Somerset to be executed; and he carried the Reformation still further, because he thought that the Reformers were the only people who would support him.

One thing was clear. If Edward VI was to die, Mary, who was a Catholic, would at once depose Northumberland; and Edward VI was a very weakly boy. In a last hope of preserving his power, Northumberland caused his own son to marry Lady Jane Grey, who was a Protestant and, being a great-granddaughter of Henry VII, had a claim to the throne. When, however, Edward VI did die, no one would acknowledge Lady Jane as queen. Mary was chosen, and she punished Northumberland by putting him to death. Lastly, Lady Jane Grey and her husband were found guilty of high treason and beheaded.

Mary was a Catholic, as her mother had been; she was also half a Spaniard. All her ideas turned to Catholicism and to Spain. She wished to restore the old religion, and she resolved to marry her cousin, Philip II, King of Spain. This was disastrous for England. Many were determined not to return to the obedience of the Pope,

Northumberland
and Lady
Jane Grey.

Mary,
1553-8.

The
Spanish
Match;
Fear of
Spain.

or to see their country ruled according to Spanish ideas in the interests of Spain.

Mary soon showed that there was good reason to fear her. In February, 1555, Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester, was burned at the stake as a heretic. From that time onward till the end of Mary's reign, about ten persons were burned every month: the total mounts up to nearly three hundred. Even the Archbishop Cranmer was not spared. Every effort was made to lead him to declare himself a Roman Catholic: he was kept long in prison; he was sentenced to death, and then told that his life would be spared if he recanted; he was taken to witness the last agonies of his brother-Protestants being burned alive. In a moment of weakness he gave in; he signed a declaration that he had returned to the Roman faith. But the weakness passed, and when in spite of the declaration he was brought to the scaffold, he repudiated it and thrust into the flames the erring right hand with which he had signed the cowardly document, that it might first be consumed.

Mary's
Persecu-
tion;
Death of
Cranmer.

Three other bishops perished in the same way. As a whole, however, the persecution fell upon the poorer classes. Unknown men went peacefully to the most horrible of deaths sooner than deny what they believed, or save themselves by a lie. The sight of this simple faith, which was not to be overcome even by the flames, did more to make men admire the Reformers, and seek to imitate them, than all Mary's cruelties could do to terrify them into being Catholics.

Effect of
the Per-
secution.

Bishop Latimer, when in the midst of the fire, showed the same spirit when he cried to his fellow-sufferer, Bishop Ridley, "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, play the man; we shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out".

England
becomes
Protestant
under
Elizabeth,
1558-1603.

Latimer was right. Englishmen had entered on Mary's reign still undecided; they came out of it convinced. They would have no more of the Pope and no more burnings. Elizabeth, the new queen, was of the same mind. She put an end to the fires in Smithfield; she refused obedience to the Pope. The mass was abolished, and the service-book in English restored. Her government was at first very tolerant. All she desired was that her subjects should go to church, and should acknowledge her as head of the National Church. After her excommunication by the Pope in 1570, however, her government took measures against the Roman Catholics, many of whom were executed.

Growth of
a Puritan
Party.

England was now severed from Rome, but her religious troubles were not over. There was a small party in England who thought it was wrong for Elizabeth to be head of the Church; they believed that she should use her royal authority to support and protect it, but that she should not try to control it. They were content to stay within the Church of England for the time being, in the hope that the Reformation would be carried a stage further by the removal of archbishops and bishops, and by the elimination of everything in the ritual and doctrines of the Church for which they could not find express warrant in Scripture. We shall see that this small party of Puritans by degrees grew powerful, and eventually threw the whole of Great Britain into confusion.

CHAPTER 18

THE UNLUCKY HOUSE OF STEWART

In Scotland, soon after Bruce's death all that he had won came near to being lost. His son David II was but four years old when he became king, and Edward Balliol revived his father, John's, claims. Now Edward III thought that the peace of 1328 was a disgrace to England, so he determined to make Scotland a vassal kingdom and to use Balliol for that purpose. He invited Balliol to his court and gave him an army to invade Scotland. The Scottish regent, Mar, was defeated at Dupplin Moor, and Edward Balliol was crowned at Scone as a vassal king. He was driven out a few months later, but in 1333 Edward III defeated the Scots at Halidon Hill and overran the country. The young king, David, had to be sent to France for safety.

Edward III
renews
Scottish
War.

Dupplin,
1332;
Halidon
Hill, 1333.

Edward III had done as much as his grandfather, but he could do no more. He could defeat the Scots in battle; the English archers proved as fatal to Scottish men-at-arms as they were to the French; but he could not conquer the country. Besides, he soon had, as we have seen, a French war on his hands; and by degrees Scotland slipped from his grasp. The castles were recaptured, and David returned to his kingdom.

In 1343 Edward III made a two years' truce with Scotland. When this was ended, Edward was again attacking France, and the Scots had to choose between remaining at peace with England and renewing their alliance with France. They decided that if Edward conquered France he would next attack Scotland, so David II tried to help France by invading England. He was

Neville's completely defeated at Neville's Cross, near Durham, and **Cross,** he himself was taken prisoner. Warfare between the two **1346.** nations continued, and in 1356 Edward III ravaged the Lowlands on the expedition known as "The Burnt Candlemas". A year later the Scots ransomed David, and foreign invasion was for the time stayed. Unluckily **The** another trouble soon appeared—quarrels at home. For **Scottish** the next two hundred years it seemed as if nothing but **Nobles.** the presence of the hated English invader could unite Scotland, and keep king and nobles from flying at each other's throats.

David II died childless, and so the Bruce line came to an end. The crown passed to Robert Stewart, the son of David's sister Marjorie Bruce and Walter the Steward of Scotland. He took the title of Robert II.

The The House of Stewart may well be termed "The **Stewarts.** Unlucky House". Six kings, descended from Robert II, sat on the throne of Scotland. Of these only one, Robert III, had a peaceful end, and he, before his death, saw one of his sons cruelly murdered, and the other a prisoner in England. Robert III, too, was the only one to attain old age; none of the others lived to be forty-five; three of them were cut off ere they had entered on the second half of life's natural span: James I. was murdered; James II killed by the bursting of a cannon at the siege of Roxburgh; James III assassinated; James IV killed at Flodden; James V died of a broken heart. It is a series of disasters almost without a parallel in history. Year after year and reign after reign, war follows rebellion and rebellion follows war, in dreary succession. A king could do little for his people so long as his whole resources were being strained to crush the great families into obedience.

Happily, this was not the whole story. In fifteenth-century Scotland, as in fifteenth-century England, the

ordinary folk, the peasants in the rural districts, the merchants and craftsmen in the towns, went their own way regardless of the quarrels of their betters. Whether a Stewart or a Douglas had the upper hand, fields were still ploughed, sheep were still driven to pasture, the burgesses still bargained at the weekly markets and annual fairs, the little ships still set out for Flanders and France with their cargoes of hides and wool. In fact, the fifteenth century witnessed a slow but unmistakable increase in the wealth and prosperity of Scotland. Large and beautiful churches, substantial stone-built houses appeared in the towns. And if wealthy men no longer founded monasteries they founded colleges: three of the four Scottish universities, St. Andrews, Glasgow, and Aberdeen, were established between 1412 and 1496.

Robert III had been ruled by his brother Robert, Duke of Albany. It was Albany and the Earl of Douglas who were concerned in the murder by starvation of the king's elder son. When the younger son, James I, was released from his captivity in England, his first step was to take vengeance on the Albanys. The old duke was dead, but the king had his successor, Duke Murdac, and his two sons executed. Severity was necessary: it was well deserved. Unhappily, a stern king was certain to raise up against himself enemies who hated justice and order. Sir Robert Graham formed a plot against the king's life. Late at night a sudden tramp of armed men was heard in the Abbey of the Black Friars at Perth, where the king was staying. James, fearing the worst, tore up the planks of the floor and took refuge in a vault below, while Catherine Douglas, one of the Queen's women, tried to secure the door by thrusting her arm across as a bolt. It was all in vain. A woman's slender arm was no bar to bloody-minded villains. The king's

Robert III,
1390-1406.

James I,
1406-37.

hiding-place was discovered. Graham leapt down and murdered him.

The heir to the throne was a boy of six. A regency was necessary, and this, as usual, gave an opening to rebellions and feuds. The great House of Douglas did not lose the opportunity. James II's reign was one long struggle with this lawless family.

The Douglasses were, in fact, as dangerous to the House of Stewart in Scotland as the Kingmaker was in England to Henry VI and Edward IV. William, the eighth Earl of Douglas, used to march at the head of an army against those who offended him; he had them put to death without trial; he burned their castles and seized their lands. He even had Maclellan, the Tutor of Bombie, executed in defiance of the king's express command while the king's messenger was having dinner with him in his castle. Ferocious as the Douglasses were, the king was as merciless. The sixth Earl of Douglas and his brother had been invited to a friendly banquet in Edinburgh Castle, and there seized and beheaded. Crichton the chancellor was responsible for that deed; but the king soon copied it, stabbing Earl William at Stirling with his own hand. For three years all Scotland was fighting either for James Stewart, or for James Douglas, Earl William's successor. It was only by acting on Bishop Kennedy's advice—to deal with his enemies as a man would deal with a sheaf of arrows, breaking them singly, since they were too strong when bound together—that James II triumphed. Bribery, promises of pardon or advancement, treachery, robbed Douglas of many of his followers. His army was routed by the Earl of Angus, the head of a rival branch of the Douglasses, at Arkinholm, 1455. Douglas fled into England, where he remained for thirty years. When he at last came back to Scotland, the king had him placed as a monk in the Abbey of Lindores,

where he died. With him fell for ever the power of the elder line, the "Black" Douglas.

Struggling with the Scottish nobility was like encountering the Hydra; one head smitten off, straightway others reared themselves up in its place. Humes and Hepburns were even more fatal to James III than the Black Douglas had been to his father. James III advanced to high office men who were not members of the nobility. The turbulent nobles could not endure their exaltation, and they were hanged from the Bridge of Lauder by Archibald Bell-the-Cat, Earl of Angus. Six years later the Humes and Hepburns raised an army, captured the king's son at Stirling, and made him march with them against his father. They met the king at Sauchieburn. James III, fleeing from the field, was thrown from his horse, and carried, stunned and bleeding, into a mill at Bannockburn. Feebly he asked for a priest. A man calling himself a priest was brought in; bending over the king on pretence of hearing his confession, he stabbed him to the heart.

James III,
1460-88.

Battle of
Sauchie-
burn, 1488.

With James IV domestic disorder for a time died down. The king was strong, kept good order, and enforced the law. Yet it was his ill fate to plunge afresh into war with England, and bring on his country the greatest defeat in her history.

James IV,
1488-1513.

Henry VIII had joined a league against France, and Louis XII, the French king, appealed to Scotland as the ancient ally of France. James determined upon war. He gathered the finest army Scotland had ever mustered and invaded England. Surrey encountered him at Braxton Hill near Flodden, not far from the junction of the Tweed and the Till. The fate of the battle was at first doubtful. The Highlanders on the Scottish right were swept away by the English archers, but, on the other wing, Hume with the Borderers rudely shook the

Flodden,
1513.

English right and threw it into confusion. Hume failed to follow up his advantage: his border-lances devoted themselves to plundering the English camp. Meantime the Scottish artillery, which James thought would decide the battle, was silenced by the more accurate fire of the English guns, which were then turned against the densely-packed phalanxes of spearmen and dismounted knights in the Scottish centre. The Scots grew impatient, and rushed forward in a confused mass against the English. But in hand-to-hand fighting the cumbersome Scottish spear, eighteen feet long, was far less effective than the bill with which most of the English were armed. While the English centre met the full force of the Scottish onslaught, Stanley kept his men in hand, and charged the Scottish centre in flank and rear. Closed in on every side, the Scots fought with brilliant but useless courage against English lance, bill, and bow.

“ But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spear-men still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood
The instant that he fell.”¹

The ring was broken and utterly destroyed. James IV himself was killed in the midst of his nobility. There was hardly a house in Scotland that had not to mourn the loss of its best and bravest.

This disaster did not end at Flodden; it brought in its train another minority, and a fresh outburst of violence at home. Queen Margaret, the young king's mother, the Duke of Albany, and Angus the Red Douglas, all

James V,
1513-42.

¹ *Marmion*, Sir Walter Scott.

quarrelled over the regency. A fearful picture of the time is given us by the fierce affray in the High Street of Edinburgh between the Douglasses and the Hamiltons. The latter were routed, and their hurried flight gave the name "Cleanse the Causeway" to the affray. The Douglasses even followed the Archbishop of Glasgow into a church, and would have murdered him had not one of their number, Gavin Douglas the poet, interceded for him.

The Red Douglas.

Two attempts were made by Lennox and Buccleuch to release the king from the hold of Angus; both ended in defeat; in the last Lennox lost his life. At length the king fled by night from Falkland, and took refuge in Stirling Castle. The nobles, who had grown to hate the domineering sway of the Red Douglas as they had hated the Black, gathered in his support, and Angus was driven into exile.

James V, now grown to manhood, had a good idea of the duties of a king. He marched through the borders, and hanged the notorious border thief Johnny Armstrong, along with others of less renown; he reduced the Highland chiefs to some sort of obedience; he instituted the College of Justice, a supreme court with fifteen expert judges; he also strove to find out about his people by going amongst them in disguise, under the name of the Gudaman of Ballengeich. All this held out bright prospects for the future.

It was but a lull in the storm. Clouds soon gathered again; the waves of the Reformation began to trouble Scottish waters. Henry VIII wished his nephew James to copy his example in casting off obedience to the Pope. James would not do so. Gradually ill-feeling between the sovereigns ripened. War was declared in 1542, but James V had not the advantages of his father. His nobles would not stand by him, some because he had reduced their privileges, others because they did not approve of

James V and Henry VIII at variance.

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James V
and Henry
VIII at
variance.

further war with England. The army which he gathered at Fala Muir refused to follow him.

Solway
Moss, 1542.

A second force of ten thousand men was raised and crossed the Esk. There the ill-feeling that existed between the king and many of his nobles was aggravated by the action of James, who appointed his favourite, Oliver Sinclair, to the command of the army. This was done in a way that aroused the bitterest resentment. As soon as the little army had reached English ground, Sinclair produced the royal commission with which he had been secretly entrusted, and, as he stood on a platform borne shoulder high, had it read aloud by a herald. It was received with indignation; and the camp presented the sight of a disorderly mob. At this crisis there appeared a body of English cavalry some two thousand strong, that had been sent to reconnoitre. The leaders, Dacre and Musgrave, as soon as they had taken in the situation, availed themselves of it by charging headlong into the disorganized crowd. The Scots, taken by surprise, hardly attempted to make a stand, but fled wildly in all directions. There was no battle at Solway Moss; it was the rout of a rabble. It was a crushing blow to James, who, a few days later, died of grief.

CHAPTER 19

MARY STEWART AND THE REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND

When James V lay dying of a broken heart, news was brought to him that his queen had given birth to a daughter. James groaned; he had hoped for a son to continue the direct line of his house, and now this last

Mary
Queen
of Scots,
1542-67.

hope was taken away. "It came with a lass; it will pass with a lass," were his sad words. Soon after he died, leaving the little princess of a few days old as his successor. This princess was Mary Queen of Scots.

The position reminds us of a similar state of affairs more than two hundred and fifty years before, when the Maid of Norway was left heiress to the Scottish crown. Once again English policy turned to the idea of a marriage. Henry VIII wished to marry his son, Edward VI, to Mary, and after his death Somerset the Protector held to the same plan. Yet both of them tried to gain their object in the most foolish way possible, namely, by violence. In 1544 Henry sent a force which landed at Leith and burnt Edinburgh, but the Scots took their revenge a year later by utterly overwhelming another army of the English at Ancrum Moor. Somerset was as unwise as his master. In 1547 he sent an army under Lord Grey to invade Scotland. Grey met the Scottish forces at Pinkie, and in spite of the heroic resistance of the Scottish pikemen, at last defeated them by his superiority in firearms. The Scots were furious. Huntly well expressed the feelings of the nation when he told Somerset "he had no objection to the match, but to the manner of the wooing". Mary was sent for safety to France, where she afterwards married Francis, son of the French King.

**English
Marriage
Schemes.**

Before this, however, the Reformation in Scotland had begun. As in England, the printing of Bibles increased the number of those who began to think that both the government and the teaching of the Church was wrong. The Scottish Parliament gave all men leave to study the Scriptures in their own tongue; in consequence, we are told that "the Bible might be seen lying on almost every gentleman's table, the New Testament was carried about in many men's hands".

**Reforma-
tion in
Scotland.**

Cardinal Beaton, the head of the Church party, decided to make an example. He chose George Wishart, who had made himself known by his fearless preaching against the Church. First a priest tried to murder Wishart, but the preacher snatched from him the dagger hidden under his gown. Early in 1546 Wishart was arrested and condemned to be burnt as a heretic. Cardinal Beaton looked on from a window in his castle of St. Andrews while the deed was done.

Wishart's friends determined on revenge. They stole into the castle, stabbed Beaton, and hanged his body from the very window from which he had witnessed Wishart's death. Then they defended the castle successfully against the regent's forces, until, after more than a year had passed, it was bombarded and captured by a French fleet. Most of them were punished by being sent to the French galleys. There was, however, one amongst them, who, while tugging at his oar as a galley-slave, never lost the hope that he might be permitted to return to his country and carry on the work of the Reformation in the spirit of his dead friend Wishart. This was John Knox. He had to pass twelve years in exile, however, before his wish was fulfilled.

Meantime the cause of Protestantism in Scotland was in grave danger. Marie de Lorraine, the mother of the young queen, became regent. The Scottish Reformers, knowing that she was a Roman Catholic and a Frenchwoman, did not trust her half-hearted promises of freedom of worship, and certain nobles, Glencairn, Argyll, Morton and others, encouraged by a letter which John Knox sent from Geneva, formed an association to lead the Protestant party. The first act of these Lords of the Congregation, as they were called, was to demand that worship should be conducted in English, and that anyone might exhort and pray in his own house as he pleased.

The year 1558 saw the prospects of the Reformers darken. The marriage of the Queen of Scots to the Dauphin Francis meant that the Queen Mother could now count on the whole power of France being placed at her service to crush the Reformers. They grew brighter, however, when, before the end of the year, Elizabeth succeeded her sister, and England finally threw off the yoke of Rome. Far more valuable than this, however, was the return of Knox in the following year. Men's epitaphs are often misleading, but the words of Regent Morton tell us the naked truth about Knox, and reveal the secret of his power—"Here lies one who never feared the face of man". One who knew him bears the same testimony: "the voice of that one man is able in an hour to put more life into us than six hundred trumpets continually blustering in our ears". Soon after his return Knox preached a vehement sermon in St. John's Church at Perth against idolatry. Some of his hearers suited their actions to what they took to be Knox's teaching. They threw down the statues in the church, and destroyed the pictures and the stained-glass windows. The spirit spread from Perth to St. Andrews, Dundee, Linlithgow, Edinburgh, and all over the country. The greatest ruin fell on the monasteries. "Burn the nests and the rooks will fly," cried Knox. The monks were scattered, their churches and buildings unroofed, their lands taken by the nobles, many of whom enriched themselves. We must regret the wanton destruction of abbeys and the spoliation of cathedrals and parish churches, which has left Scotland so bare of fine buildings, but we need not be surprised at it. "Revolutions," it has been said, "are not made with rose-water"; and the Reformers wished to efface everything that might connect men's minds with the religion which they hated.

Return of
Knox.

Nothing was left to the Regent but to use force. She

obtained troops from France; the Lords of the Congregation gathered an army and besieged the French at Leith. At this critical moment, when it was not clear to which side victory would incline, help came from England. Elizabeth hated Knox for a book he had written against women-rulers, but she feared still more the danger of Scotland falling into French hands. She resolved to aid the Lords of the Congregation, so she sent a fleet into the Firth of Forth, and cut off the French supplies. This ended the contest. The Regent, Mary of Guise, died, and by the Treaty of Leith all French troops and officials were compelled to leave Scotland. The Franco-Scottish alliance, which had endured for more than two centuries, was broken at last. Power was thus left in the hands of the Reformers, and so Scotland became avowedly Protestant.

Treaty of
Leith, 1560.

Thus when after her French husband's death Mary Stewart came back to Scotland, her position was one of great difficulty. She was Catholic, but her people were Protestant; she was fond of France, but her people had grown to distrust the French; she was the next heir to the English throne, but Elizabeth would not admit her claim. These things were all against her. Yet she had advantages. She was beautiful, and could persuade men to do what she wanted; and she was clever. Even John Knox himself admitted that. "If there be not in her a crafty wit," said he, "my judgement faileth me."

Mary in
Scotland,
1561.

But Mary's crafty wit was too often overruled by her emotions. In spite of Elizabeth's opposition she made up her mind to marry her cousin, Lord Darnley. Unluckily Darnley was not the right husband for Mary. The two soon quarrelled. Darnley was angry because Mary would not let him be called king; and he was jealous of an Italian musician, David Rizzio, whom Mary employed as her secretary. Although a Catholic, he

Marries
Darnley.

joined with the Protestant nobles to plot Rizzio's murder. **Murder of Rizzio.**
One evening he came to Holyrood in company with Ruthven, Morton, Lindsay, and others. Darnley went first into the queen's room, where she was sitting with Rizzio. He pretended he had come on a friendly visit, and put his arm round the queen's waist. Suddenly she was alarmed to see Ruthven, clad in complete armour, ghastly pale of face, stalk into the room. Rizzio read his fate at a glance. He clung to the queen's skirts and cried for mercy, but he was in hands which knew no mercy. He was dragged into the next room and murdered.

After the murder Darnley betrayed his accomplices to Mary, but swore that he had had no part in the plot. **Bothwell murders Darnley.** Because of this, James, Earl of Bothwell, determined to put him out of the way. It is not clear that Mary knew of his intention, but what happened afterwards seems to show that Mary would not have felt any very strong disapproval if she had known. The facts were these: Darnley, who had been ill, was lodged at the Kirk o' Field to recover. On Sunday, Feb. 9th, 1567, Mary visited him there: in the evening she returned to Holyrood, where she danced at a ball with Bothwell. As the dawn broke next morning, Edinburgh learnt with horror that the Kirk o' Field had been blown into the air with powder, and Darnley murdered. Bothwell had planned the deed; he had even ridden straight from the ball at Holyrood to see it done.

None doubted that Bothwell was guilty; most believed that the queen knew of his design. It was impossible to bring the murderer to trial, as he filled Edinburgh with his followers, and his accuser feared for his life if he appeared. Bothwell's next act was to carry Mary with him to Dunbar. As if to leave nothing undone that could shock or disgust her people, within three months of Darnley's murder Mary married the murderer. **Mary marries Bothwell.**

This was beyond endurance. The nobles gathered an army, and met Bothwell's men at Carberry Hill. It could scarcely be called a battle. Bothwell's followers deserted him in scores. Bothwell himself had to flee for his life; he left Scotland, and took refuge in Denmark, where he died eleven years later, a prisoner and insane. Mary herself was shut up in Lochleven Castle. As the castle lay on an islet in the midst of the loch, it was thought that she could not escape. Her son James was declared king; Moray, who was Mary's half-brother, was made regent.

Mary
abdicates;
James VI,
1567-1625.

Yet Mary still had friends. She contrived to escape in disguise, and joined her adherents, the Hamiltons. Moray saw there was no time to lose. Although he had but few soldiers, he advanced against the Hamiltons, met them at Langside, and routed them. Mary rode southward from the field, utterly desperate. In a last hope she resolved to throw herself on Elizabeth for help. Her letter to the English queen when she landed at Workington ran, "It is my earnest request that your Majesty will send for me as soon as possible, for my condition is pitiable, not to say for a queen, but even for a simple gentlewoman." Pity, however, was not the motive most likely to guide Elizabeth. Bad as Mary's fate had been, even worse was in store for her.

Mary flees
to England.

CHAPTER 20

ROYAL MARRIAGES

We have already followed the important effects of one royal marriage—we have seen how Henry VIII married Catharine of Aragon, grew tired of her, and in order to have the marriage annulled had quarrelled with the Pope

and the King of Spain, and had ended by breaking with the Roman Catholic Church altogether. But this is only one of a series of royal marriages which at this time influenced not only England and Scotland at home, but affected their dealings with the rest of Europe. There are several others; and we cannot hope to understand the history of England at this time, unless we grasp the importance of these marriages.

To do this we must put modern ideas quite out of our head. Though nowadays our royal family is related to that of Norway, we do not dream that if other heirs fail, the kingdoms would be united. But it was very different in the sixteenth century. Countries were then regarded as the *property* of their sovereigns. Should the ruler of Spain marry the ruler of England, it was thought that the two countries would naturally be united in policy; should there be an heir to such a marriage, he would naturally rule both countries. And besides this, it was felt that he would do his best to compel his dominions to hold the same religion as he held himself. So that on the result of a royal marriage there often hung not only the policy of a nation in its dealings with other nations, but also its religion and institutions; nay, even its separate existence as a nation might be in danger.

Under these circumstances, it is easy to see that royal marriages concerned England and Scotland very closely indeed. And it happened, by a curious chance, that just at this time, when both peoples were more interested in the question of their religion than anything else, their religion was apparently at the mercy of a marriage. For in England two queens, Mary and Elizabeth, came one after the other; and at the same time the ruler of Scotland was also a queen, Mary Queen of Scots, who was, further, the next heir to the throne of England. Thus

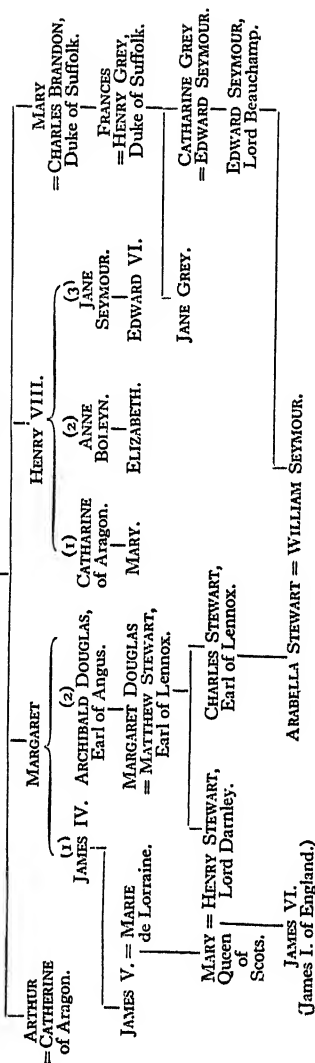
and the King of Spain, and had ended by breaking with the Roman Catholic Church altogether. But this is only one of a series of royal marriages which at this time influenced not only England and Scotland at home, but affected their dealings with the rest of Europe. There are several others; and we cannot hope to understand the history of England at this time, unless we grasp the importance of these marriages.

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THE TUDOR LINE

HENRY VII. = ELIZABETH OF YORK.



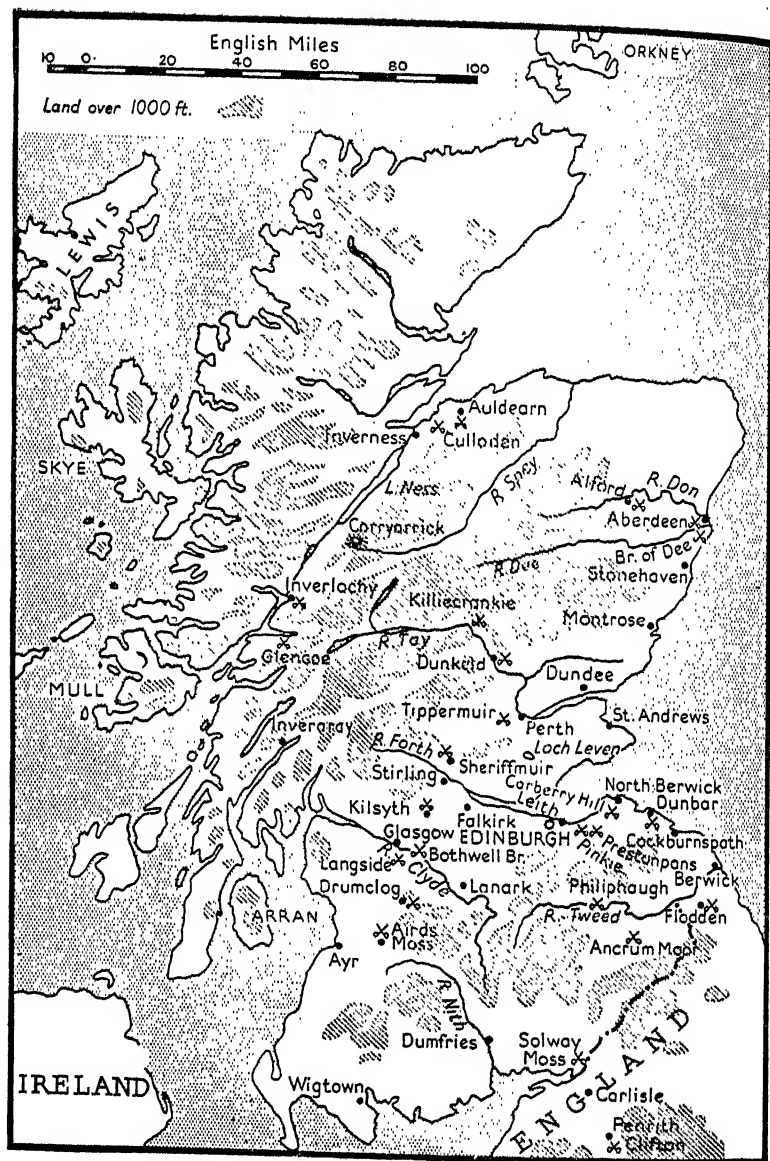
both nations followed with strained attention the marriage proposals for these queens.

Mary Tudor, Queen of England, whose reign we have already discussed, was herself a Catholic, and the child of a Catholic mother. She married her cousin, Philip II of Spain, a ruler who is known in Europe as the greatest persecutor of Protestantism who has ever lived. Mary honestly felt that she was doing what was best for the Roman Catholic Church, and Bishops Bonner and Pole gave her every support. Englishmen did not in those days think persecution wrong, but they did not give themselves enthusiastically to the task of burning heretics, especially when the Queen was under Spanish influence. Had Mary and Philip had a child he would have united England to Spain, and might have continued the policy of his father and mother towards Protestants. But no child came. Thus England was saved from falling into the clutches of Spain; for the next heir was Elizabeth, and she was a Protestant.

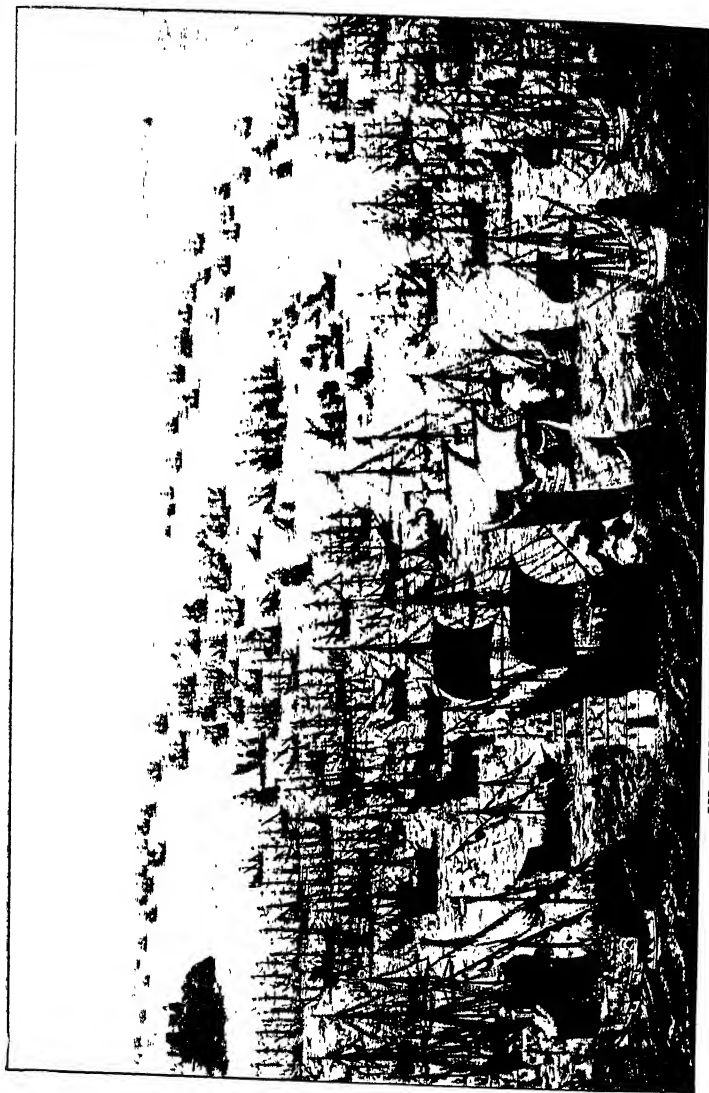
Yet it seemed as if the evil day was after all only put off. A Protestant queen had taken the place of a Catholic. But a queen was always dangerous. Elizabeth would be sought in marriage too: it was not likely that so great a prize, the Queen of England, would lack offers. In fact she was besieged with offers, both from France and Spain. Philip II, in his anxiety to add England to his dominions, even thought of marrying Elizabeth himself, though she was his late wife's half-sister, and though such a marriage was absolutely forbidden by the Church. But Elizabeth, though she liked admiration and attention, and loved to coquet with her suitors, had no real wish to marry. To marry, she saw, would be to fall into the hands of a foreign prince. England, she declared, was her husband, and she remained a virgin queen.

Mary
Tudor
marries
Philip II
of Spain.

Marriage
Proposals
for
Elizabeth.



SCOTLAND: 1500-1750



VI. THE SPANISH ARMADA IN THE CHANNEL

(See Note on p. xiv)

This was satisfactory for the time, but gave at first little hope for the future. But if Elizabeth were to leave no heir, another queen, Mary Queen of Scots, would succeed her. Mary was a Roman Catholic, half-French by blood, wholly French in her sympathies, and through her marriage to the short-lived French king, Francis II, Queen of France as well as Queen of Scotland. It seemed as if England had escaped Spain only to fall into the jaws of France.

**Difficulties
of the Suc-
cession.**

Here again fortune fought for us. There was no child of this marriage either; and Francis II died while still a young man, after only a few months of rule. Thus no heir was left to unite the crowns of Scotland and France, with the probability of some day adding to them that of England; and Mary Queen of Scots was more or less cut off from her alliance with France that might have proved so dangerous. She married, as we have seen, a second, and even a third time; first her cousin, Lord Darnley, and afterwards the Earl of Bothwell. But these were not dangerous royal marriages, for they did not give foreign states any claims over England or Scotland.

Now it is time to recall to our memories who Mary Queen of Scots herself was. She too was the descendant of one of these royal marriages so important in this age. She was the grandchild of James IV of Scotland and Margaret Tudor, elder daughter of Henry VII of England. This was her claim to the English throne. And by her second husband, Darnley, who was also a grand-child of Margaret Tudor, she had a son James. If this son were to live he would unite the thrones of England and Scotland. Little objection could be found to a union of this sort: it was the union of two kingdoms in the same island, with people of the same language, and similar interests, and, above all, both in the main Protestant. On the other hand, it was more than

**Mary's
Claim on
England.**

likely that James Stewart would be of his mother's religion, a Roman Catholic.

This difficulty, however, vanished with the others. When after Mary's defeat at Langside she took refuge in England, Elizabeth kept her a prisoner there. It was natural that her Catholic friends should make plots on her behalf, all the more that they were stirred up by the Spaniards to do so. First came an insurrection in the north of England, led by the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland. Then at intervals of a few years came Ridolfi's plot and another headed by a priest named Parsons, and finally Babington's plot, all with the same object, namely, to murder Elizabeth and put Mary on the throne. As Elizabeth found Mary a continual source of danger, we need not be surprised that she at last caused her to be beheaded. Such an act may perhaps be excused, but it cannot be commended. Mary had come to her for assistance; instead of getting it, she had been kept a prisoner nineteen years. Mary no doubt had been a party to a plot against the life of Elizabeth, but Elizabeth had done nothing to win the slightest gratitude from her, nor had she left her any hope of escaping, except by plots.

The result of Mary's long imprisonment and death had been to leave her son James, King of Scots and next heir to the throne of England, in the hands of her enemies in Scotland, who brought him up as a Presbyterian. We shall see that he did not keep to this church, but he always remained a Protestant, and as such England was ready to welcome him as king. Thus, when Elizabeth died in 1603 the two crowns were united in one person. The two nations so long apparently hopeless enemies, became reconciled, and James VI of Scotland became James I of England.

Plots
against
Elizabeth.

Execution
of Mary,
1587.

James VI
brought up
a Protest-
tant.

Union
of the
Crowns,
1603.

CHAPTER 21

ELIZABETH AND THE SPANISH ARMADA

Elizabeth's reign is striking from whatever point of view we look at it. It sees the establishment of the English Church, and the preparing of the way for the Union of the Crowns of England and Scotland; it is marked by important social legislation—questions of wages, of coinage, of poor relief, are all dealt with, and upon the whole successfully; it is the age of the great poets, Shakespeare and Spenser. Any one of these things would be enough to stamp a reign as remarkable. Yet there is something beyond all this; for it is in this reign that British policy, as we know it, is settled. Britain is to be strong at sea, and to spread her power over distant colonies.

There was nothing in Mary Tudor's reign that made Englishmen feel more shame than the capture of Calais by the French in 1558. That it had been in English hands since the days of Edward I, that it was the sole remaining fragment of the once vast French possessions of the Kings of England, made its loss seem doubly disgraceful. But in truth Calais was no longer of any use. The old policy of trying to conquer territory from the King of France was dead and gone. Even the enmity was gone too. Englishmen no longer hated France, but Spain. And Spain being strong at sea and in the New World, England had to look to her fleets. Since we had to fight against a maritime and colonial power, we became maritime and colonial ourselves in doing it.

Although in name Elizabeth did not go to war with Spain till 1587, yet in reality all her reign was one long

British
Maritime
Policy.

Hostility
to Mar-
itime Spain
makes
England
Maritime.

The
Adven-
turers.

war. The war differed from any war England had fought before, since it went on, far from Europe, on the Spanish Main, and on American shores. It was not called war; neither Queen nor Parliament admitted its existence. It was the work of the Adventurers—merchants and nobles who sent out ships to the Spanish Main, ready to trade or plunder as might be most convenient. The Adventurers were not indeed strait-laced. Hawkins, for example, thought nothing of taking slaves from Africa to the Spanish settlements, and compelling the Spaniards, by force of arms, to buy them. But still the slave-trader Hawkins and the buccaneers were the forerunners of the makers of our empire. They went where gain drew them, reckless of danger, and where they went British power followed.

Francis Drake stands as an example of all that was best in the Adventurers. He feared no odds against him; he it was who led seventy desperate Englishmen to attack the fortified Spanish town of Nombre de Dios in Central America—the Treasure House of the World as it was called, since the Spaniards sent thither all the silver they collected—and took it; he, again, crossed the isthmus of Panama, and surprised trains of mules laden with Spanish silver; he, too, was the first Englishman to sail into the Pacific. The Spaniards had thought themselves safe there. Drake came down on them like a thunderbolt from a clear sky, sacked the towns of Lima and Callao, captured a great galleon laden with treasure, and then continued his daring voyage round the world. He came back to England in 1580, after four years, with more treasure than ever had been brought before. It was vain for Philip the Spanish king to complain to Elizabeth that Drake was a pirate. Elizabeth might promise redress, but she never gave it. On the contrary, she accepted a share in Drake's plunder.

For many years the King of Spain did not do anything open against Elizabeth. He encouraged those who wished to murder her, but to take an open part against her would have thrown England on the side of his rival France. But Mary left her claims on the throne of England to the King of Spain. This, and the fact that Drake had harried the Spanish Main in 1585, made Philip declare war; it was decided to send the "Invincible Armada" to England, and conquer it once and for all.

The
Armada,
1588.

The Armada set sail in 1588. That it had not started the year before was due to Drake, who had sailed into Cadiz harbour and set on fire all the ships laden with stores which had been collected there. He called his exploit "singeing the King of Spain's beard". Great as was the damage he did, it was repaired by the industry of the Spaniards. All was carefully arranged: the Duke of Medina-Sidonia was placed in command; the Armada was to sail up the Channel and pick up from Flanders a Spanish army commanded by the Duke of Parma. Then it was thought that to land it in England and conquer Elizabeth would be child's play. The Spanish troops were the best in Europe; and no Spaniard dreamed that English ships could possibly resist the Armada. Philip trusted also that the English Catholics would fight for him instead of for their Protestant queen.

Never did man make a more gigantic mistake. Catholics and Protestants alike thronged to the army which Elizabeth collected at Tilbury. The fleet was put under the command of Lord Howard of Effingham. Elizabeth knew her people. "Let tyrants fear!" said she; "I am come amongst you to lay down my life for my God and for my kingdom and for my people. I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart of a king, and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Spain or any prince of Europe

Prepara-
tions in
England.

should dare to invade the borders of my realm." Good as the Spanish troops were, it may well be doubted if they would have found England so easy a prey as they expected.

They were not destined to have the chance of trying. England had another line of defence, her right arm, her navy. The Armada had to reckon with that first.

The Armada had been sighted, in mighty array, stretching over seven miles of sea, the English commanders were ready, but there was no haste or confusion. Drake, engaged at the time in a game of bowls on the Hoe at Plymouth, cried, "Let us finish this first; time enough to beat the Spaniards afterwards." When the English ships got to sea, they hung on the heels of the Spaniards on their leisurely way up the channel. They were more than a match for their unwieldy opponents; they could sail faster and manœuvre better, had heavier guns and made more effective use of them, aiming at the hulls while the Spaniards fired so high that most of their powder was wasted.

For a week the two fleets battled; a week of such anxiety was never known in England before or since. It was clear that the Armada could not beat the English; but could Howard and the captains under him beat the Armada? Some Spanish ships had been sunk, yet the Armada was still a mighty fleet when it anchored off Calais. So far it was successful.

Here, however, the plan broke down. Parma and the Spanish troops were being kept close prisoners, blockaded by the Dutch ships. Without an army Philip's invasion was impossible.

Yet Howard saw that the Spaniards could not be left to rest at Calais. Parma might come overland and join them. Accordingly fire-ships were got ready, smeared

The
Struggle
in the
Channel.

The Fire-
ships.

with tar and loaded with gunpowder, and at nightfall set drifting towards the French coast. As, flaming and exploding, they drew near the Spaniards, the Armada was thrown into confusion and stood out to sea. Wind and waves rose, driving the Spaniards first towards the Dutch coast and then northwards. Drake followed them far up into the North Sea; he would have gone farther, but powder was running short on his ships. Still, his part was done: storms did the rest. Ship after ship of the Armada was cast ashore on the Scottish and Irish coasts. The mighty fleet that had numbered 130 vessels when it left Spain, returned with 67 battered hulks.

The Armada driven Northwards and destroyed by Storms.

The victory was striking and complete. It saved England from all fear of invasion. But it did much more than that; it determined the future of England. Our interests were no longer bounded by our own isle. Even before the Armada Englishmen had planned settlements in America. It was left, indeed, to the next reign to establish them. Henceforward, however, English interests were on the ocean and abroad. We shall see England, after overcoming Spain at sea, master in turn Holland and France. Our seamen have read Europe many lessons on the value of sea-power. No more effective one was ever given than that afforded by the story of the Armada.

CHAPTER 22

THE STEWART KINGS IN ENGLAND

With the reign of James I we enter on a new period. Hitherto interest had centred round the king, or round the Church, or round the nobles, or in war. Now a new matter eclipses all the others. Everyone's eyes are fixed

James I,
1603-25;
Parliament.

upon Parliament. Parliament displays quite new vigour. Under the Lancastrian kings it had been too weak to keep the nobles in order; under the Tudors it was too anxious for a strong king to care to oppose him. But in the time of the Stewarts we see Parliament engage in struggles with the king, and come out in the end the victor. We are, indeed, at the beginning of the modern system, by which it is no longer the Crown that rules, but Parliament.

It was natural, then, that the Stewarts, who expected to rule despotically, as the Tudors had done, should find themselves in difficulties. James I disagreed with his Parliaments. His son, Charles I, quarrelled with them even more, and at last actual war began. Three main grounds of quarrel may be distinguished: (1) over religion at home; (2) over foreign policy; (3) over the right of the king to take money and govern without Parliament.

James had been brought up in Scotland as a Presbyterian, but he changed over to the Church of England. He was not, however, a bigot by nature. He did not worry about fine shades of doctrine; all he wanted was that he should govern the Church through bishops whom he had chosen. This policy was disagreeable to the Catholics, who regarded the Pope as the head of the Church, and also to the English Puritans and the Scottish Presbyterians, who thought the Church should govern itself. Very strong feeling was aroused against the Roman Catholics by the foolish violence of a few murderous traitors. Catesby, Percy, Sir Everard Digby, and some others formed an atrocious plot to blow up King, Lords, and Commons assembled in Parliament; to this they added a wild scheme of raising a rebellion, seizing James's daughter, Elizabeth, bringing her up as a Catholic, and placing her on the throne. The secret leaked out; the cellars below Parliament were searched, and Guy

Quarrels
between
the
Stewarts
and Parlia-
ment.

Religion
at Home.

Gun-
powder
Plot, 1605.

Fawkes was found watching over a score of powder barrels. The leaders of the plot were either shot down or executed. For the whole body of Roman Catholics the result was disastrous. During long years afterwards everyone regarded them as traitors at heart.

The Puritans also came to dislike the king more and more. At the beginning of the reign they presented a great petition against certain ceremonies of the Church; they did not wish to use a ring in marriage, or the sign of the cross in baptism. But the king did not yield. He refused to contemplate any alteration in the government of the Church, for he claimed to rule by divine right, and it was the bishops and those clergy who believed in episcopacy who were the most thorough-going supporters of this claim. Hence James's saying, "No bishop, no king". It was easy to see that this attitude was much disliked by his Scottish subjects, who hated bishops.

James managed to offend the religious feelings of a large number of his subjects as much by his foreign policy as by his acts at home. He wished to be a great peace-maker in Europe; with this object he strove hard to arrange a marriage between his son Charles and the Infanta, the Princess of Spain. James's subjects hated Spain. They were much more ready to fight her than to make an alliance. They remembered the days of Mary Tudor, and they hated the idea of another Spanish match. The marriage, indeed, fell through, and instead Charles married Henrietta Maria, sister of the French king. She, too, was disliked because she was a Roman Catholic; it was feared that she might convert her husband, or at any rate bring him to favour English Roman Catholics. This belief, although unwarranted, did much to make Charles's subjects distrust him. And even when James and Charles did act, as the nation wished to see them act, on the Protestant side, they were very unsuccessful.

The
Puritans.

Foreign
Policy.

Marriages.

James's daughter Elizabeth married the leader of the German Protestants, Frederick the Elector Palatine; but Frederick was turned out of his dominions by the Emperor, and James could not recover them for him, either by treaty or by fighting. And in 1627 Charles sent a fleet under Buckingham to help the French Protestants at La Rochelle against the King of France, but it was beaten off, and returned in disgrace.

Divine Right. The most bitter quarrels, however, were with Parliament. James held that kings reigned by divine right; that their power was given them by God, to be used for the good of their people, but that none on earth had any right to question how they used it—God, and God alone, would judge them if they did wrong; that they were “the Lord’s anointed”, and resistance to them was sinful. Thus James, and Charles after him, thought it to be beneath their dignity to defer to Parliament. Yet according to the constitution Parliament alone had the power of granting any money, over and above the regular revenues of the Crown, that the sovereign might require for his own uses or for carrying on the business of government. At a time when the real value of money was falling rapidly these revenues were no longer adequate to all the demands made upon them. So James and Charles were in a sorry position. They both tried to override Parliament by the use of the king’s power—what was called the “Royal Prerogative”. Unluckily for them, the Puritans and Presbyterians were strong in Parliament, and these, already angered by James’s fondness for bishops and by his attempts to marry his son to a Roman Catholic princess, were by no means inclined to give way about money.

Question of Supplies. In the struggles between James and Charles and their Parliaments two main points may be remarked: (1) Parliament was resolved to prevent the king from raising

money without its assistance; (2) it strove also to make his ministers responsible to Parliament instead of to the king for what they did.

Thus in James's reign the Commons objected to the grants of monopolies, by which some friend of the king was given the sole right of selling an article, and could in consequence put a high price on it. In Charles's reign they went further. Instead of giving the king certain taxes for life, they only gave them for two years; and when Charles tried to collect them without leave, they made him accept the Petition of Right, which declared that to take taxes except by leave of Parliament was illegal, and that no one should be imprisoned unless he was charged with some definite offence for which he would be brought to trial. Thus the two most important clauses of Magna Carta were solemnly repeated.

Petition of
Right, 1628.

Again, Parliament attacked the king's ministers. In the reign of James I the Lord Chancellor Bacon was impeached for taking bribes; the Earl of Middlesex was impeached for misusing public money; early in Charles's reign the Duke of Buckingham was impeached for failing in the war against Spain. This "impeaching" was a system whereby the Commons accused a man before the Lords as judges. In those days it was the only way to get rid of a king's minister who was disliked. Never before had Parliament interfered so much with the king's ministers.

Impeach-
ment of
Ministers.

In the first four years of his reign Charles had three Parliaments, and quarrelled with them all. Then he decided to do without Parliament, and for eleven years no Parliament met. Men called it the Eleven Years' Tyranny. Charles's ministers ruled the country for him. Strafford was sent to Ireland, where he drilled an Irish army, and persuaded the Irish Parliament to vote the king money. Lawyers, such as Noy and Finch, set to

The Eleven
Years'
Tyranny,
1629-40.

CHAPTER 23

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN KING
AND PARLIAMENT

In spite of James's success in setting up bishops in Scotland, the Church of Scotland still differed widely from the Church of England. It did not keep the feasts of the Church such as Easter and Christmas; its ministers did not use the Book of Common Prayer, which they thought resembled too closely the Roman Catholic service-books, but made up their own prayers, or used the simpler Book of Common Order which John Knox had compiled. Charles, urged on by Laud, made up his mind to reduce the Presbyterians to obedience. He caused a new service-book to be prepared, and bade the Scottish ministers to use it. But most of the ministers thought that there was even more Roman Catholic doctrine in it than in the Book of Common Prayer, and refused to use it. The few who did consent had to face angry congregations.

Charles's
Service-
book in
Scotland.

The first time that "Laud's Liturgy" was used in St. Giles' Cathedral at Edinburgh a number of women created an uproar. Their leader, said to have been one Jenny Geddes, cried out, "Wilt thou say mass at my lug!" and flung a stool at the clergyman's head. This riot marked the beginning of the downfall of a king. Resistance spread fast in Scotland. Bodies of men called the "Tables" were organized to consider what course to take. In 1638 Henderson and Johnston of Warriston drew up the National Covenant. It was signed by thousands of their fellow-countrymen, who thereby bound themselves to defend their religion with their

The
National
Covenant.

lives. Scotland was in revolt. If Charles was to regain his power it must be by war.

War then became inevitable; but Charles was from the first doomed to failure. Yet failure meant another Parliament; the meeting of another Parliament meant the downfall of Charles's absolute government. All fell out as his wisest ministers had foreseen; Charles had no regular troops and no officers, while Alexander Leslie could muster 16,000 Scots, many of whom were tried soldiers. In the first campaign Charles dared not strike a blow; in the second his raw levies fled before the Scottish Covenanters at Newburn. The Scots marched into Yorkshire, and Charles had to beg for a truce. The Scottish victory in the "Bishops' Wars" was the first step in the final triumph of Parliament over the king.

In 1640 Charles called two Parliaments. The first, the "Short" Parliament, was much in sympathy with the Scots, and the king dismissed it. The second, which was not finally dissolved for nineteen years, and thus gained the name of the "Long" Parliament, was the body that was to see him dethroned and beheaded.

No such violent ideas entered the heads of the members at first. Led by Pym and Hampden, they were bent on reform; they intended to make Charles rule according to the law. They therefore in 1641 swept away the Star Chamber and the High Commission Court; they passed a Bill that Parliament was to meet every three years; they declared all the king's plans for raising money without leave of Parliament illegal. Of Strafford they determined to make an example, and he was impeached. The Commons found, however, that they could not prove him guilty of treason, so they brought in a Bill of Attainder against him. A Bill of Attainder asserts that a person is guilty, and states the form of his punishment. It has, of course, to pass through Parliament. The king

The
Bishops'
Wars,
1639-40.

The Long
Parliament.

Reform;
Execution
of Strafford.



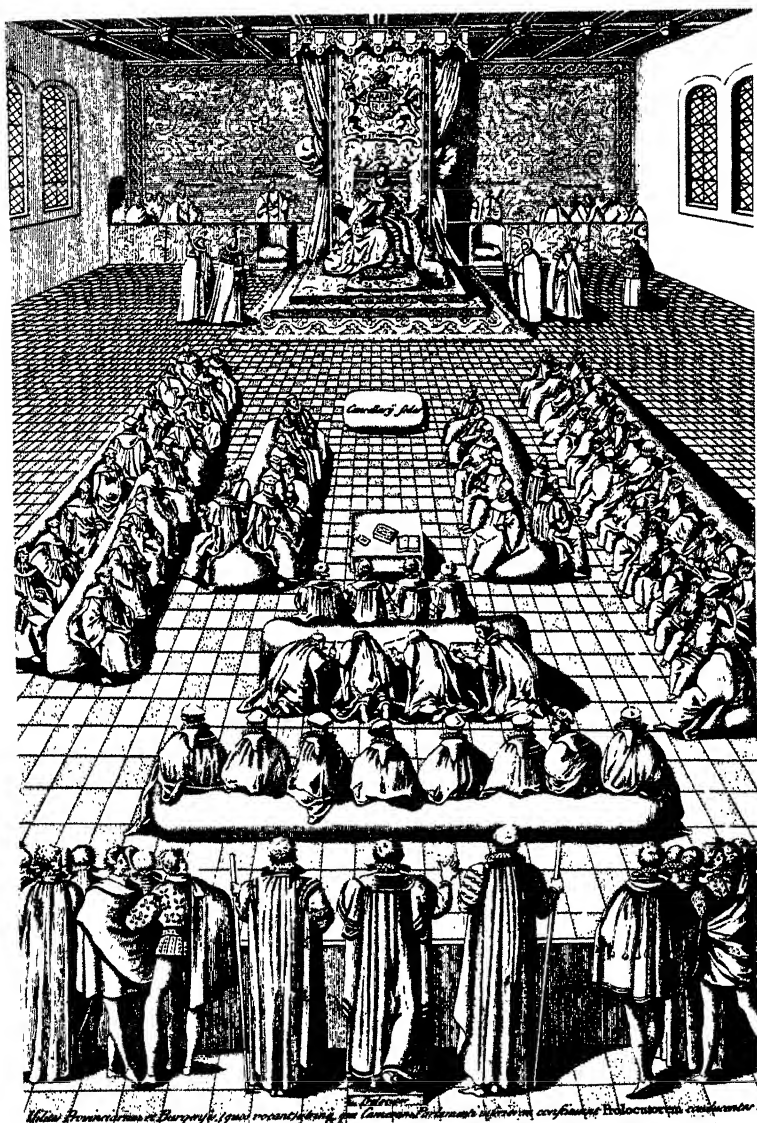
ENGLAND IN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

who had promised to protect Strafford, assented with reluctance to the Bill, and Strafford was executed two days later—sacrificed, without justice, to the popular demand for a victim. Laud, who had also been impeached, was kept in prison for four years and then executed.

Arrest of the five Members. The king's unconstitutional powers had been destroyed. He had promised to amend. Moderate men thought enough had been done; they did not want the revolutionary changes in the Church of England that the Puritans demanded and they were not inclined to press the king too hard. But Charles was, throughout all his life, his own worst enemy. In 1642, just when he was beginning to be trusted, he showed that he was quite unworthy of trust. Followed by a band of armed attendants, he went down to the House of Commons to arrest by force Pym, Hampden, and three others, who were the chief leaders against him. He failed; the members had had timely warning. As he said himself, "the birds had flown". And this could lead but to one thing—war between King and Parliament. Promises were useless, the matter had to be fought out.

War; Royalists at first successful. The Civil War falls into three periods. In the first the king had the upper hand. His followers were naturally better soldiers, more used to horses and arms than were the citizens who made up the Parliamentary armies. Charles, too, had a dashing cavalry leader, his nephew, Prince Rupert, whose charges bore down his opponents' ranks. The Parliament forces fought hard, but steadily lost ground. Once the king drew quite close to London, but he did not dare to attack in force. None the less he seemed to be on the point of triumphing.

The Presbyterian party held sway in Scotland, and when the English Parliament sought help there, it was promised on condition that the Presbyterian form of church government should be established in both coun-



VII. THE HOUSE OF LORDS IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

(See Note on p. xiv)

tries. This condition was laid down in the Solemn League and Covenant, which the Parliament reluctantly accepted in 1643. The Scots were satisfied, and a Scottish army set out and helped to turn the scale against Charles. His generals, Rupert and Newcastle, were utterly beaten at Marston Moor. All the north was lost to the king.

Solemn
League
and
Covenant.

Marston
Moor,
1644.

Though at Marston Moor they stood fast when the English infantry gave way, the battle was not so much a triumph for the Scots as for an English Puritan named Oliver Cromwell. Cromwell had raised a regiment of his own. He saw that discipline and zeal alone could beat the loyalty of the Cavaliers. His troopers were well-drilled, terrible fighters, who earned for themselves the name of Cromwell's Ironsides. They were godly men also, who thought themselves to be a chosen people fighting the Lord's battles against the Cavaliers, whom they called the Philistines. Cromwell was not a Presbyterian, but an Independent, one who thought that each congregation should manage its own affairs, independent of control by bishop or presbytery or any other ecclesiastical court. He thought that all, except perhaps the Catholics, should be allowed to worship as they pleased; consequently all the sects, Baptists and Quakers as well as Independents, looked up to him as their leader. Further, since Pym and Hampden, the first great leaders, were both dead, Cromwell had no rival. When by the Self-denying Ordinance Parliament voted that its members were no longer to hold posts in the army, a special exception was made in favour of Cromwell. Thus he was bound to become the most powerful man in the realm, for he was the one link between Parliament and the Army. And when in 1645 Parliament gave him the task of forming a New Model Army, he included many of his friends, the Independents, in it. Most of the officers were Independents. Thus the New Model became the army of the sects, a

Cromwell
and the
Ironsides.

The New
Model
Army.

church in arms. Cromwell was not a man for half-measures like the early Parliamentary leaders. "If I met the king in battle," he said, "I would fire my pistol at him as I would at any other man." His army met the king at Naseby in 1645, and routed him so completely that Charles had scarcely a regiment left.

One last flicker of hope remained for the king. He was beaten in England; but in Scotland the Marquis of Montrose, at the head of an army of wild Highlanders and Irishmen, had overthrown every force the Covenanters could bring against him. In one year he won five victories; he advanced far into southern Scotland; there was nothing to prevent him from marching into England. Many of his Highlanders, however, deserted him to go home with their booty. Thus deprived of half his army, Montrose was surprised on a misty morning in 1645 by David Leslie at Philiphaugh, and routed.

Charles, being now without supporters, surrendered to the Scots at Newark. He would not take the Solemn League and Covenant, and the Scots, in return for arrears of pay, gave him up to Parliament. But by this time the Presbyterian Parliament and the Independent Army were quarrelling, and a few months later Charles was in the power of the Army.

The king, knowing that no love was lost between Parliament and Army, thought that by playing off one against the other, he might get back his power. Unluckily he only made each party distrust him more and more, and to make matters worse war broke out again. There was a rising of Royalists in Kent and Essex, while the Duke of Hamilton, with a body of Scots who dreaded the power of Cromwell and the Army, invaded Lancashire. Cromwell marched north and defeated Hamilton at Preston. But this fresh outburst of war made the Army think that there could be no peace while the king was

alive, and it came back to London resolved to call "that man of blood, Charles Stewart", to account.

It is important to notice that the final measure, the execution of the king, was the work of the Army, headed by Cromwell. Parliament would not agree to bring the king to trial till Cromwell sent down a file of musketeers to the House and turned out the moderate Presbyterian members. The court that tried Charles was made up chiefly of Independents. The great mass of Englishmen was opposed to his execution. Scotland, as we shall see, was driven into war by it. The king's dignified behaviour on the scaffold made many men think him a martyr. But for the time the Army was supreme. There was none left who could resist it.

Execution
of Charles
I, 1649.

CHAPTER 24

BRITAIN GOVERNED BY AN ARMY

So far from making things more simple, Charles I's execution only led to more confusion. Many Englishmen thought the execution little better than a murder, but Parliament and the Army had seemed to agree about it, and for the moment nothing could be done against them. Yet while in England the office of king was abolished, and a Commonwealth set up in its place, both Scotland and Ireland recognized the king's son as King Charles II, and were ready to fight for him. Hence, for the present, Parliament had to support the Army, in order that it might subdue its enemies.

Result of
the King's
Execution.

The turn of Ireland came first. Cromwell went over with his red coats. The Irish troops held the town of Drogheda against him. The town was stormed, and

Ireland.

Cromwell bade his men give no quarter. All the defenders were massacred. This violent and ruthless act so terrified the Irish that after it little resistance was made. Charles II's general and soldiers were driven from the country. The Irish Parliament was abolished, and instead Irish members were to be sent to Westminster.

Scotland, however, cost Cromwell more trouble. There two parties were trying to come to an agreement with Charles II. The Presbyterian party was willing to have him back if he would take the Covenants. Montrose offered to restore him the kingdom, by the aid of a Highland army, without any conditions. Charles tried Montrose first. But when Montrose landed in Scotland and began to gather the clansmen he was defeated and captured. He was delivered into the hands of the Scottish Government, which regarded him as a traitor to the Presbyterian cause, and put him to death.

Charles then fell back on the Covenanters, headed by the Marquis of Argyll. He came to Scotland and took the Covenant. Cromwell at once made ready an army to invade Scotland, but David Leslie, who commanded the Scots, was every whit as able a soldier as Cromwell. He laid waste the country north of Berwick through which Cromwell would have to march, and retired to a strong position near Edinburgh. Cromwell tried to tempt him from it, but in vain. At last, wearied out by want of food and long marching, the Roundheads fell back to Dunbar. Leslie followed, drew up his army on Doon Hill overhanging the Dunbar road, and seized the defile at Cockburnspath, which cut off Cromwell's retreat. Cromwell appeared to be in a trap. It was hopeless to attack the Scots on Doon Hill, since they numbered two to one. It seemed that he must surrender, or retreat to his ships. Suddenly the Scots threw away the victory that

Scotland;
Death of
Montrose.

Charles II
and the
Covenanters;
Dunbar,
1650.

was almost won. Fearing that Cromwell was embarking his men, and would so slip through his fingers, Leslie ordered an attack. Cromwell saw the mistake. "The Lord hath delivered them into my hands," he cried. His troops fell on the Scottish right wing, and rolled it back in confusion on the centre; soon Leslie's whole force gave way. In the pursuit the Scottish army was almost destroyed.

All Scotland south of the Forth fell into Cromwell's hands as the fruit of his victory. Leslie, however, gathered another force, and entrenched himself near Stirling. Cromwell crossed the Firth of Forth and began to ravage Fife. This left the road to England open, and Charles promptly took it. At the head of 18,000 men he marched south. The Roundheads were soon at his heels. He was headed off from the London road, and at last brought to bay at Worcester. The battle which followed Cromwell called his "crowning mercy". Charles's men were scattered; the king himself had to flee for his life; for six weeks he wandered about in hourly peril. At last he escaped to France.

**Battle of
Worcester,
1651.**

Meanwhile with the last Scottish army thrown away in England, Monck, whom Cromwell had left to command in his place, had an easy task. The country was subdued, even the Highlands were pacified. The Scottish Parliament was done away with, though it was restored at the Restoration.

Cromwell and his army seemed invincible. They had conquered the Royalists, Presbyterian Scotland, and Catholic Ireland. They had laid low a king and two Parliaments. Now we shall see them continue their work by subduing the English Parliament also.

Part of the work indeed had been done already, when Colonel Pride, by Cromwell's orders, had "purged" Parliament of the ninety leading Presbyterians who

The "Rump" dissolved by the Army. opposed the king's trial. But even the "Rump", as the remaining members were contemptuously called, fell to quarrelling with the Army. Cromwell wished them to dissolve and call a new Parliament; they refused, unless it was laid down that they were all to have seats in the new Parliament; they also urged that the Army should be disbanded. At last Cromwell lost patience. He went down to the House himself, banged his fist on the table, and bawled out, "Get you gone! Give place to honest men." His soldiers poured in and turned out the members by force.

Failure of Cromwell's Parliaments. This was one way of settling the question, but it was not the right way. King had gone and House of Lords had gone; the House of Commons was the last relic of legal government left. Now that had gone too, destroyed by military violence. Many people had despised the "Rump" but they did not approve of this way of getting rid of it. Consequently, none of Cromwell's later schemes for new Parliaments were ever successful. He tried first an assembly of "faithful persons, fearing God and hating covetousness", recommended by ministers throughout the country. These were called in mockery "Barebone's Parliament", from the name of one of the members, "Praise-God" Barebone. This assembly accomplished nothing and soon resigned its power to its maker, Cromwell. Then, in 1653, Lambert brought forward a new constitution, the "Instrument of Government", and Cromwell, who was by it made head of the State, accepted it.

Cromwell a Despot. Thus the government fell into the hands of Cromwell; he had a Council of State to help him, and Lambert's constitution had given him the title of Protector, but his real power rested on the Army. He could not afford to quarrel with it, and thus he refused to take the title of king, because the Army hated the idea of a king. The

result was that Cromwell, having taken arms for a Parliament against a despotic king, became himself in the end more despotic than ever Charles I had been. He ruled without Parliament, though three times he summoned and dissolved sham assemblies; he took taxes without Parliament; his major-generals, who governed various parts of Britain, were absolute.

England had become a military state. It had overthrown Ireland and Scotland. It made war on the Dutch Republic. Blake and Monck, neither of them sailors by profession, soon proved their worth at sea. The Dutch fleets were defeated, and the Dutch forced to beg for peace. Cromwell wished to put himself at the head of a great League of Protestants in Europe, and he allied himself with France, because France, though Catholic, was a bitter enemy of Spain. English fleets took Jamaica, and captured Spanish treasure-galleons as they had done in Elizabeth's reign. Cromwell's death, however, in 1658, put an end to these ambitious schemes.

He left his power to his son Richard, but Richard was not a soldier, and the Army would not obey him. In a short time it appeared that the Army would obey no one; the "Rump" was recalled, and again expelled. Everyone hated the Army, but no one could suggest a means of getting rid of it.

Death of
Cromwell;
Disunion in
the Army.

Fortunately the Army was not united. Monck marched southwards from Scotland with his men; Lambert at the head of another section of the Army tried to stand against him and failed. Monck reached London, and to everyone's joy declared for a free Parliament. This meant the recall of Charles II, for all alike, Cavaliers and Parliamentarians, had grown united in their hatred of the Army, and were ready to welcome back a lawful king. In 1660 the Convention Parliament, which Monck caused to be summoned, immediately invited the king back.

Monck and
the Restora-
tion.

On his way towards London Charles passed at Blackheath the real masters of England, a sullen and mutinous mass of soldiery; but they could find no leader, their day was past.

CHAPTER 25

FROM RESTORATION TO REVOLUTION

To understand the reigns of Charles I's two sons, Charles II and James II, we must bear in mind the following main facts:—

**Main
Facts,
1660-89.**

**The
Religious
Situation.**

1. Charles, as far as he had any religion at all, was a Roman Catholic, but would never allow religious scruples to hurt his own interests; James was a Roman Catholic by conviction—a conviction which ultimately cost him his crown. Both tried to get liberty of worship for the Catholics.

2. The great majority of Englishmen were members of the Church of England. Those who were expelled from the Church because they believed in the Presbyterian form of Church government, together with the Independents and other small sects, began to be known as "Dissenters". They were not allowed to meet for public worship, and were otherwise hardly dealt with by Parliament. To gain their support by offering them toleration was an object of both kings.

3. All Europe felt itself in danger from the growing power of France under Louis XIV. The leader of the Grand Alliance against France was Charles II's nephew, William of Orange, who wished to get Britain on his side. On the other hand, Louis XIV tried to get Britain as his ally, or, if he could not manage that, to keep Britain

**Foreign
Policy.**

so distracted with quarrels at home that it could not interfere against him. Further, it was easy for Louis XIV to exercise influence with our kings, because both Charles and James were his cousins.

4. Parliament began by supporting the king; but, as he favoured the Catholics, it turned against him. It would have liked to see him fight for William of Orange against France, but did not dare to trust him with a standing army. Everyone remembered what Cromwell's army had done.

Attitude of
Parliament and
Church to
King.

5. The Church supported the Crown more steadily than Parliament. It feared the Puritan party, and therefore taught that resistance to a king was sinful. It was not till James II made an open attack on Protestantism that the Church wavered in its friendship for the Royal power.

We may now go on to remark some of the chief events in the course of this second struggle between Crown and Parliament, which ended, as the first had done, in the overthrow of a king.

Charles II was wiser than his father. At bottom he was resolved to do nothing that should, to use his own words, "make him go on his travels again". He was also in a stronger position, because Parliament, in the first enthusiasm of the Restoration, had voted him a revenue for life. Indeed the Parliament that was elected in 1661 was so warmly Royalist that it was called the "Cavalier" Parliament. Charles knew that he would never get another which would be so friendly, so he kept it sitting for eighteen years, and by bribing some members and making friends of others, could generally make it do what he wished. Thus, whereas up to 1640 men had grumbled because Parliaments sat too little, now they complained that the same Parliament sat too long.

Charles II,
1660-85.

Charles's first minister was Clarendon, a strong friend

work to revive old practices by which the king could get money without asking Parliament for it. For example, they advised him to collect "ship-money", a tax which had fallen on sea-coast counties to provide a fleet in time of war. Charles imposed it in time of peace on inland counties. A squire, John Hampden, refused to pay, saying it was illegal since Parliament had not voted it. He was tried, and the judges by a small majority decided against him. They held that the tax was legal if the country was in danger, and that the king was the sole judge of what was "danger". The Court of Star Chamber inflicted heavy fines on all who wrote or spoke against the king; the High Commission Court dealt in the same way with the Puritans. Men were tried before these courts without a jury, and were often condemned to have their ears cropped or to be cruelly flogged. Archbishop Laud, who detested the Puritans, ruled the Church of England, and tried to establish the same elaborate and dignified ritual in every church in Charles's dominions.

This, however, proved fatal to Charles's plan of absolute rule. With the very strictest care it was only just possible for him to get money enough to carry on the government in time of peace. If a war was to break out, it was clear that he would be forced to call a Parliament to vote money for it. We shall see that Laud's action did provoke a war, and with that war the Eleven Years' Tyranny came to an end.

Church of England, but they feared the Catholics much more. The Declaration united all Protestants against the king. Parliament declared it to be grossly illegal, since it was a law made without their consent. To lull the storm Charles withdrew the declaration.

Still Parliament was not satisfied. It passed the Test Act, by which everyone holding office under the Crown was to take the sacrament according to the rites of the English Church. Thus for more than a century and a half not only Catholics but Protestant Dissenters were denied commissions in the army and navy and excluded from every form of public service. It pressed on a marriage between James's daughter Mary and William of Orange. The Test Act broke up the Cabal. **The Test Act, 1673.**

Charles agreed to the Act to stay the hostile feeling against the Catholics, but in vain. Suddenly an idea sprang up that the Catholics were actually plotting against English liberty and the Church. A wretch named Titus Oates swore that he had found out such a plot. He told his story to a London magistrate, and soon after this man's dead body was found in a ditch. Everyone believed he had been murdered by the Catholics. Men thought the days of the Gunpowder Plot were coming again. Oates's lies were taken as proof against any Catholic. Other informers rivalled him in inventing stories. No jury would accept a Catholic's evidence; in the eyes of men at that time every Jesuit was an open traitor, every Catholic a conspirator in disguise. Many innocent men were put to death. Even the House of Lords condemned Lord Stafford, old, respected, and absolutely guiltless, and had him executed. **The "Popish Plot", 1678.**

Nothing would satisfy the Whig or "country" party in their panic. Urged on by Shaftesbury, they tried to exclude James from succeeding to the crown. But here Charles checkmated them. He dissolved Parliament, so **Failure of the Exclusion Bill.**

that the Exclusion Bill could not be passed. For the same reason he prorogued and then dissolved his third Parliament, summoned a fourth Parliament to meet at Oxford and dissolved it within a week, and for the last four years of his reign ruled without a Parliament, getting money from Louis XIV. Most men were tired of the violence of the Whigs, and were not sorry when the king drove Shaftesbury from the kingdom and punished many of his most reckless followers.

Thus Charles II had neither failed altogether nor had he been altogether successful. He had indeed staved off the attack on his brother, defied Parliament successfully, and ruled as an absolute monarch, but he had not obtained liberties for Catholics. He had tried, and when he saw it was hopeless he had wisely drawn back, just as, in 1679, he gave his assent to the Habeas Corpus Act, which made it impossible for him to order the arrest and imprisonment of anyone who had offended him, without a definite charge on which he could be brought to trial. He was not a man to push things to extremes.

James II was more headstrong than his brother. He was openly a Catholic. He meant to rule as an absolute king, and have his own way in matters of religion.

An event in the beginning of his reign might have warned him of his danger. The Duke of Monmouth, an illegitimate son of Charles II, landed in Dorsetshire, and put himself at the head of a Protestant rebellion. Numbers of western peasants joined him. He planned a night attack on the Royalist forces sent against him. To reach them he had to march over a portion of Sedgemoor, which is cut by deep ditches. Three of these were safely crossed, but just as he neared the Royalists, a fourth ditch, of which he did not know, was found yawning in front of his men. In the confusion a pistol went off. The Royalist troops were roused, and poured a fire into

their helpless enemy. Monmouth's men fought bravely, but as many were only armed with scythes and pikes, they could do little. The artillery and cavalry were brought up to complete the rout. Monmouth was captured soon after, and beheaded.

A terrible vengeance was taken on his followers. Five judges were sent into the west, headed by Jeffreys. Jeffreys was brutal and overbearing. He acted more like an accuser than a judge. He abused and insulted all the prisoners, and bullied juries into condemning them. More than 300 rebels were hanged, 800 more transported to the West Indies, and large numbers flogged, imprisoned, and fined. One poor woman named Alice Lisle was beheaded merely because two rebels had taken shelter in her house. Rightly was the name "the Bloody Assize" given to this circuit. **The Bloody Assize.**

Encouraged by the ease with which Monmouth had been overcome, James went on his way. He began to collect a standing army, mainly composed of Irish Catholics, and he admitted Roman Catholics to high office in Church and State. He even put Catholic priests into college offices at Oxford, and he imitated Charles by issuing a second Declaration of Indulgence, and ordering the clergy to read it from their pulpits. When, in 1688, seven bishops petitioned against this, James had them brought to trial, and strove in every way to get them condemned. But though the judges had been appointed by the king, and though the jury felt that they would in all likelihood be punished if they said "Not guilty", yet it was impossible to say that the bishops had committed any crime. So, to the great joy of England, they were acquitted. **Trial of the Seven Bishops.**

The one thing that had made men bear with James so far was that he had no son, and his heiress, Mary, was a Protestant, and married to the Protestant champion

in Europe, William of Orange. It was thought that when James died all would be right again. Just at this time, however, James had a son. Men saw that this son would be bred a Catholic like his father, and that the only way to get rid of them was to turn James off the throne.

Thus an invitation was sent by many of the chief nobles to William of Orange, asking him to come to England. He was only too glad. He landed with an army in Devonshire. It soon became clear not only that he would win, but that he would win without fighting a battle. James's ministers, generals, and soldiers deserted him wholesale. At last William drew near London. James was at one time in his hands, but William did not wish to keep him a prisoner; on the contrary, he desired to be rid of him; he made it easy for him to escape, and James fled to France. Then, in 1689, a Parliament was summoned which declared William and Mary King and Queen of England, and the Scottish Parliament at the same time offered them the Scottish crown.

Landing
of the
Prince of
Orange.

CHAPTER 26

WILLIAM III: THE REVOLUTION SETTLEMENT

Nothing shows more clearly how completely James II had lost the affection of his English subjects than the ease with which William overthrew him. The Cavalier party in England, that had fought four bloody campaigns for his father, let James go without a blow on his behalf. In Scotland and Ireland, however, there was more resistance.

William
and Mary,
1689-1702.

The persecution of Nonconformists had fallen with

special bitterness on the Scottish Covenanters. Charles had set up bishops again, had turned the Presbyterian ministers out of their churches, and had employed soldiers to punish all those who attended conventicles, as the open-air meetings were called in which the Covenanters gathered to worship in the way of their fathers. Men, and even women, had been imprisoned and shot down; others, who were rash enough to rebel, were brought before the Council, tortured with the thumb-screw and the boot, and at last hanged—"sent to glorify God in the Grassmarket", as Lauderdale brutally put it. Cruelty only led to violence. In 1679 Sharpe, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, was murdered before his daughter's eyes by a party of desperate men. A rebellion had followed in the west. The Covenanters had beaten off the royal horse at Drumclog, but had been scattered themselves at Bothwell Bridge. None of the king's officers had been so stern towards the rebels, and none in consequence was so bitterly detested by them, as John Graham of Claverhouse, who was created Viscount Dundee.

Persecution in Scotland.

It was to Dundee that James gave over his power in Scotland. Dundee saw that in the Lowlands nothing could be done for the house of Stewart, but, since William was known to be friendly to Argyll, he thought that the rest of the clans, who hated the Campbells, would rise for King James. He soon was at the head of an army of clansmen. He fell on the Williamite leader, Mackay, at the head of the Pass of Killiecrankie. Mackay's men fired a volley, which failed to check the charge of the Highlanders. While they were fumbling with their clumsy bayonets, which then fitted into the barrel of the musket, the enemy was amongst them. Horse and foot were swept away together: Mackay's force seemed annihilated. Yet in the moment of victory James's cause was

Dundee slain at Killiecrankie, 1689.

lost. Claverhouse—at whom the Covenanters had so often fired silver bullets, while praying that the precious metal would overcome the powers of darkness which they believed to watch over him—lay dying, shot through the breast. Their leader gone, the strength of the Highlanders passed away; the army that had routed Mackay was driven off from Dunkeld by the Cameronians, a regiment newly formed from the Covenanters of the west, and soon after dispersed.

Trouble was over for the time. Unfortunately the hatred felt by the other clans for the too successful Campbells, which lay at the bottom of it, was only made more bitter by the treacherous massacre of the MacDonalds of Glencoe, the work of Campbells from Argyll's own regiment. It is said that William did not know what was intended, but the order, drawn up by Dalrymple, William's Scottish adviser, "it will be a proper vindication of public justice to extirpate that sect of thieves", bears William's own signature, so the king cannot be pronounced guiltless of what was done.

The Highlanders took up the Jacobite cause because their chiefs were mainly Episcopalian or Roman Catholic and disliked the Presbyterian Lowlands. The Irish Catholics fought for a king of their own religion because they hoped to make him restore to them all the land that had been taken from them and given to Protestant settlers. At first all Ireland was in James's hands, save only the towns of Londonderry and Enniskillen, in which the Protestants, many of them Scottish Presbyterians, held out stoutly. Londonderry was besieged for 105 days; the defenders were reduced to gnaw hides to keep life in their bodies; a dog's paw was sold for 5s. At length William's ships broke through the boom placed to block the river Foyle, and relieved the town. In the next year William took over an army, and, more through his adver-

Massacre
of Glencoe.

Jacobites
in Ireland.

Siege of
Londonderry,
1689.



CHARLES I
(See Note on p. xv)



OLIVER CROMWELL
(See Note on p. xv)

VIII. LEADING FIGURES OF THE CIVIL WAR

sary's indecision than his own military skill, succeeded in beating James at the hard-fought battle of the Boyne. Battle of the Boyne, 1690. While his army withdrew southwards, slowly and in good order, James raced to Dublin, where he told Lady Tyrconnel, "Your countrymen have run away", and received the stinging answer, "If they have, Sire, your Majesty seems to have won the race". Although James himself gave up in despair, and went to France, the Irish continued to resist, fighting more stoutly than they had done at the Boyne. The last struggle was at Limerick, where a treaty was made by which William was accepted as king. It was further agreed that the Catholics should enjoy the same liberties as in the reign of Charles II. Treaty of Limerick, 1691. The English Parliament, however, would not recognize this part of the treaty. The Irish Parliament came under English influence, all Roman Catholics were excluded from it, and a period of persecution began. This breach of faith increased the national hatred to English rule.

William was now master of all James's dominions. He used his power wisely and moderately. He would not punish men for their opinions, or for what they had done for James. On one occasion he was given a list of those who were plotting against him. He put it in the fire without reading it. Britain indeed might be thankful for so generous-minded a king.

The overthrow of James settled most of the questions between King and Parliament for ever. All the claims of Parliament were summed up in the Bill of Rights, Bill of Rights, 1689. which pronounced it illegal for the king to "dispense with" or set aside the laws, to levy money, or to keep a standing army in time of peace, without leave of Parliament. Further, it was declared that Parliament was to be freely elected, and should have liberty to debate about anything it pleased; and, finally, that no Catholic could be king. Henceforward power was in the hands of Par-

liament. Although William wished to take his ministers from both the Tory and the Whig parties, yet in a short time he recognized that it was expedient to choose his ministers from that party which was in a majority in the Commons. Thus we have the beginnings of our modern system of party government; but, as we shall see, a long time was to pass before the system was perfected.

CHAPTER 27

WAR WITH FRANCE: MARLBOROUGH

**Beginning
of a New
Hundred
Years'
War with
France,
1689-1815.** The accession of William III was followed at once by a war with France, which lasted eight years. Nor does this war stand alone; it is the forerunner of many others. Indeed, if we take a general view of the 126 years that lie between the accession of William and the battle of Waterloo, we shall find that war goes on almost exactly half the time. There are seven wars, which, when added together, take up rather more than sixty years. In the eighteenth century war with France is almost the rule. But if, instead of going 126 years onward from 1688, we look back over the same length of time—that is to say, roughly speaking, to the beginning of Elizabeth's reign—we find quite a different state of affairs. War with France is the exception; in the earlier period there are only two wars with France, lasting three years. It seems very curious that for a century and a quarter we have only three years of war with France, and then for the next century and a quarter we have sixty years of fighting. Why was this so? Why did the wars begin with William III?

The lapse of time enables us to give an answer to the

first question, which would hardly have been accepted in William's or Anne's day, and yet was true. Britain was entering upon a second Hundred Years' War with France, not this time for territory in France, but for colonial power. The question really was whether the New World and India should fall into French or British hands. But this only came in sight by degrees; it was hardly visible in William's day; it was not conspicuous in Anne's reign; but fifty years later, when a war between Britain and France led to fighting all over the world, it was obvious.

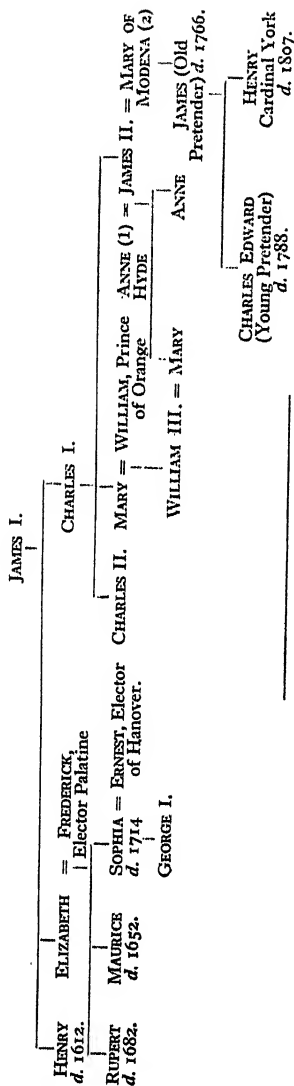
The War
Colonial in
Character.

The fact is that William and his English subjects were both at war with France, but for different reasons. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that William's whole life is summed up in enmity to France. France was the leader of the Catholic opposition to Protestantism; she was threatening all Europe by her growing power; especially was she dangerous to William's native country, Holland. And just at this time a fresh danger appeared. It seemed likely that France would be united with Spain, for Louis's grandson was heir to the Spanish throne. Such a union might give France all the wide Spanish possessions in the New World, and it would upset the balance of power in Europe altogether. William, therefore, set himself to check Louis XIV by a Grand Alliance; when Britain came under his sway he included Britain, as a matter of course, among the allies. It was, in fact, a master-stroke of his policy, for in the previous reigns it had seemed likely that the Catholic Stewarts would take the side of their Catholic cousin, Louis XIV.

Growing
Power of
France.

Englishmen, however, did not take so wide a view. They made war against France because France helped James II. Louis had received him, and given him a palace and large sums of money, had called him King of England, and had sent French troops to fight on his behalf in

GENEALOGY OF THE STEWARTS.



Ireland. Britain, therefore, fought against Louis as a Jacobite, not against Louis as a danger to Europe.

This comes out clearly in William's war. It was not very popular, and it was not successful enough to excite enthusiasm. William was always being defeated. It was true that he had generally fewer men, and that he was clever enough to prevent the French generals gaining much by their victories. Yet it was hard to feel proud of a war in which all that could be said was that William had done his best, and that the defeats had not turned out so disastrous as had been expected. In reality it was a great achievement for William to hold his ground at all. But this was not understood; so when Louis made peace at Ryswick in 1697, and admitted William's title to be King of England, his British subjects were satisfied that enough had been done. That they had no wish to carry on an eternal war with Louis was shown by the next step which Parliament took; it began to reduce the army, and sent away William's Dutch guards.

William's
War Un-
popular.

After the Treaty of Ryswick the great powers had agreed upon an elaborate division of the Spanish dominions by which the French claimant was to get little. Within three years Louis broke the treaty, and accepted the whole inheritance of Spain for his grandson. William saw there was more urgent need for war than ever before. Parliament, however, would not listen to him. Had Louis been prudent it is likely that Britain would have remained neutral. But Louis took a false step. James II died, and Louis recognized his son as James III, King of England.

Louis
breaks his
Promises.

This piece of impudent interference set everyone against him. On all sides war was demanded: it was necessary to avenge the insult, to teach Louis that he could not by his word make or unmake British kings. Thus the war which began in Anne's reign was very

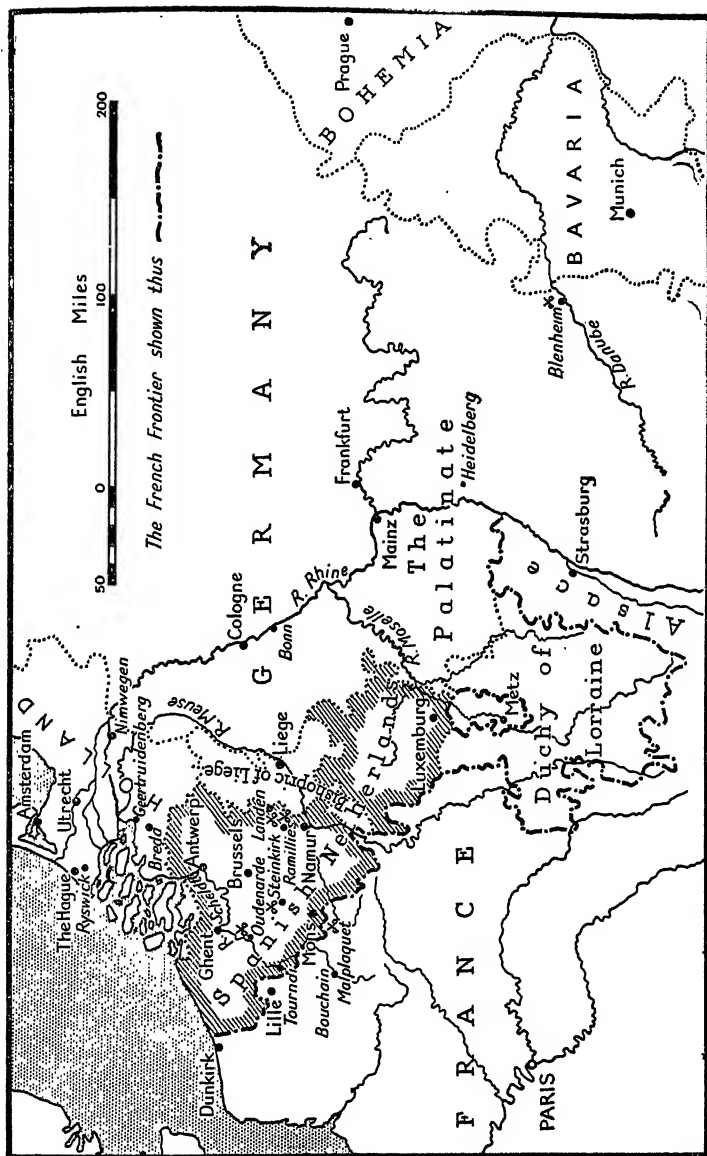
War of
Spanish
Succession,
1702-13.

different from that of William's. It was popular instead of unpopular; and beyond this, it was brilliantly successful instead of being dubious and indecisive; William never won a pitched battle against the French; Marlborough never lost one.

Marlborough. Much has been written against Marlborough. He was greedy for money; he changed sides too often; he liked to play a double game; he even kept up a correspondence with the Old Pretender while he was commander-in-chief of Anne's armies.

Yet although Marlborough had some detestable points in his character he was no traitor, but a great statesman and an admirable general. He was always good-tempered, and thus was able to manage the numerous allies, Dutch and Germans, who formed part of his army. He was cool, brave, wary, resolute. None knew better than he how to arrange his forces for an attack, or how to wield them in battle itself.

Battle of Blenheim, 1704. Marlborough's first great battle showed what a keen eye for war he possessed. He was commanding the English forces in the Low Countries; he was to protect Holland from a French invasion. But Marlborough knew that the right way to protect it was not by waiting in his lines till the French attacked him; the true course was to strike a great blow at the French wherever a chance appeared. In 1704 a French army was pushed forward down the valley of the Danube, threatening Vienna. Marlborough saw that by marching southward at once he could come down on the French flank, and force it to give up the attack on Vienna. But the march was long: it had to be done speedily and quietly, so as not to give the French warning of what was intended. The Dutch, too, were much alarmed lest they should be attacked by the French while Marlborough was away. Marlborough overcame all these difficulties. He met the French under



FRENCH NORTH-EASTERN FRONTIER UNDER LOUIS XIV

Tallard at Blenheim, on the banks of the Danube. The battle was long doubtful, until a great charge of the English cavalry, led by Marlborough himself, at last broke the French centre. The French army was cut in two, and the right wing, hemmed in with the Danube at its back, was forced to surrender. Marlborough wrote to his wife: "The army has won a glorious victory. M. Tallard and two other generals are in my coach, and I am following the rest."

Europe could scarcely believe that the French troops, so long believed invincible, had been routed in this way. It seemed to be an accident. But in the course of the next five years Marlborough showed that it was no accident. He beat the French in three great battles in the Low Countries—Ramillies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet. He took all the French fortresses; he even made ready to invade France itself.

Meanwhile, however, England was growing tired of the war. Marlborough had at first been supported by the queen, since Marlborough's wife was the queen's closest friend. But the duchess had a violent, domineering temper, and by degrees Anne took a dislike to her. She made friends instead with a Mrs. Masham, who was in the hands of the Tory party, and the Tory party were anxious for peace. At length Marlborough was recalled, and peace was made at Utrecht. The French king promised to leave off supporting the Pretender, and Britain gained Gibraltar, Minorca, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, and St. Kitts, and also the right of shipping slaves to the Spanish colonies.

Treaty of
Utrecht,
1713.

We remember that the war was begun to keep Louis's grandson, Philip, off the throne of Spain; this object was not attained. Philip became king there as Philip V. But Britain had ceased to care about this. Her real aims were now plainly colonial and commercial. We can see

this by the gains which she took under the treaty: two ports in the Mediterranean, two colonies in the New World, and a trading privilege that brought much wealth.

CHAPTER 28

PARLIAMENTARY UNION OF ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND

Ever since James VI of Scotland had become James I of England, it was only too plain that great difficulties might arise from the fact that England and Scotland were very loosely joined. Hitherto the two kingdoms had agreed in the main to accept the same sovereign, although, as we have seen, Scotland at one time set up Charles II, while England had a Commonwealth. Both had agreed to obey William and Mary, and after them Anne. Beyond this agreement ended. The English Parliament chose as the next heir after Anne the Electress Sophia, a Protestant and a granddaughter of James I. It was not, however, certain that the Scots would accept this. Supposing they were to choose someone else, the kingdoms would be again divided.

In the beginning of Anne's reign it seemed quite possible that Scotland would insist on breaking up the union of the crowns. The whole nation was in a discontented state. The Jacobites hoped to put James II's son, the Old Pretender, on the throne; the Presbyterians feared that the queen might be tempted to overthrow the establishment of the Presbyterian Church which William III had promised to maintain; and everyone was furious about the failure of the Darien Scheme.

This Darien Scheme was the invention of a Scot

The Darien Scheme. named William Paterson. He had been the founder of the Bank of England. In 1695 he came forward with a proposal that the Scots should form a trading company like the English East India Company, which had been so successful, and plant a colony on the Isthmus of Darien. He hoped that by taking up a position there, where only a narrow strip of land separates the Atlantic from the Pacific, the colony would attract traders from all quarters and soon grow wealthy. He spoke of a fertile soil, and held out hopes of great riches, both from commerce and the search for gold; soon all Scotland grew red-hot over his plan. Everyone who had money hastened to take shares in the company. It is said that nearly one-half of the wealth in the country was invested in it. In 1698 five ships set sail from Leith carrying 1200 colonists, all sure that they were setting out to make their fortunes.

Failure. Their hopes were doomed to bitter disappointment. When the colonists got to Darien, they found the climate unhealthy and ill-suited for white men to live in. And besides, both England and Spain were hostile to them. The English were jealous for their own trade. They wished to keep all commerce with English colonies in English hands; if anyone else was prosperous they thought it was at England's expense. William III opposed the scheme both before and after the expedition sailed, and orders were sent to the English colonial governors to refuse even food to the Darien colonists. The Spaniards claimed that the Isthmus of Darien was Spanish territory, and sent soldiers to eject the Scots. Thus all the Scottish plans came to nothing; the first colonists were starved out, and a second expedition, after gallantly defeating one force of Spaniards, had to surrender to superior numbers. The luckless Fort St. Andrew, which the colonists had built, was abandoned to moulder into decay, a collection of ruined and fire-scorched huts, a

burying-ground of innumerable Scottish hopes. Only a few survivors, broken by fever and famine, returned home. All the money was lost. Hundreds of families were ruined.

The plan may have been rash, but the jealousy of the English government and merchants took away whatever chance it had. It is little wonder that the Scots were furious. That the Spaniards should behave as foes they could understand; but that Englishmen should refuse bread to starving colonists who were under the same king and spoke the same tongue was inhuman. So when Anne begged the Scottish Parliament to settle who should succeed to the throne after her, the Scottish Parliament replied by passing the Act of Security, which laid down that no king of England was to be chosen to rule in Scotland unless he would guarantee that for the future Scotsmen should have the same liberties to trade as England enjoyed.

Scottish
Hostility
grows.

Act of
Security,
1704.

This caused much anger in England. An act was passed that if the succession was not speedily settled Scotsmen were to be treated as foreigners, that no Scottish goods were to be admitted into England, and that Carlisle, Newcastle, Berwick, and Hull were to be fortified. Troops gathered in the north. It seemed as if war might break out, and Bannockburn and Flodden be fought over again.

Happily there were wise heads on each side, and they kept cool. Anne's adviser, Godolphin, was ready to give way over the questions of commerce if Scotland would consent to closer union. Accordingly, in 1706, an equal number of English and Scottish commissioners were appointed, and in less than four months they came to terms. Of these the chief were:

Terms of
Treaty of
Union.

1. That for the future the two countries were to form one realm, Great Britain, with one Parliament sitting at

Westminster, and containing forty-five Scottish members in the Commons and sixteen Scottish peers in the Lords.

2. That the Church of Scotland would remain Presbyterian, and the system of Scottish law be unchanged.

3. That Scotsmen were to have the same liberties to trade within England, and with English colonies—which would be no longer English, but British—and foreign nations, as Englishmen had.

4. That a sum of money should be paid over to Scotland to be applied to pay off the Scottish National Debt, and relieve those who had lost by the Darien disaster.

It was doubtful for some time whether these terms would be accepted by the Scots. Parliament was on the whole friendly, but the people hated the idea of a union in which their representatives would form an insignificant minority—forty-five members out of five hundred and fifty-seven—in the House of Commons. 'They thought that their nation was selling itself, and that, whatever England might promise, the Scottish Church, Scottish trade, the whole Scottish way of life, would be in danger. Lord Belhaven bewailed, in a mournful speech, what he took to be the ruin of Scotland. He likened Caledonia's

Treaty of
Union
accepted,
1707.

fate to that of Cæsar; he spoke of her sitting helpless, awaiting the fatal stab that would end her life, dealt by her own children. The Duke of Hamilton and the Jacobites threatened a rising; Edinburgh was in an uproar; the Cameronians of the west were ready to take arms at the call of their ministers. Still, Parliament went steadily on, and at length the treaty was passed.

On 1st May, 1707, the Union took place. In the long run all the prophecies of evil turned out to be false. Of course it was many years before the two nations lost all the bitterness which had been growing for centuries, before Scotland could take advantage of the opportunities that the Union afforded her, but nowadays no reasonable

person doubts that the Union was wise. It found Scotland a poor country; it enabled her to become a rich one. Scottish enterprise seized the opportunities that were opened to her; her trade and industry have grown gigantic; her manufactures are found all over the world. Thanks to the excellent system of national education, based on the principle, for long strange in England, that no one should be barred from school or college through poverty, but that each should get a training suitable to his abilities, the ordinary Scotsman was well able to use the chances that were given him. There is, however, much more than a mere gain in wealth. If before the Union each kingdom had reason to be proud of its national history, they can now glory every whit as much in the later history of the joint realm of Great Britain. Each had found the other a sturdy foe; since they agreed to take the same side for ever, both have been the gainers, and the valour displayed at Stirling, Falkirk, Bannockburn, Flodden has been more happily employed on many a foreign battlefield, or in isolation in the forests and trackless wastes of Canada, Australia, and Africa, for the building up of a great empire.

Effects of
the Union.

CHAPTER 29

THE " 'FIFTEEN " AND THE " 'FORTY-FIVE "

In spite of the Act of Settlement, which had declared the house of Hanover to be heirs to the throne, the last few months of Anne's reign were months of great excitement and uncertainty. Bolingbroke was at the head of affairs; he was known to have plotted deeply with the Jacobites and to favour the Pretender. But Anne died

George I,
1714-27.

before his schemes were ready, and George I, the son of Sophia of Hanover, who had died a few months earlier, became king without resistance.

The Jacobites were bitterly disappointed. Anne they had accepted since she was a Stewart, but George I, though he had as much Stewart blood in him, had spent all his life in Germany, and indeed was so much a foreigner that he could not speak English. They began at once to meditate rebellion.

The Highlands was clearly the most promising place to begin. Thither the Earl of Mar went, and under pre-
 "Fifteen",
 1715-16. tence of a grand hunting-party, assembled the chiefs of most of the clans and appointed a day for gathering. Mar found the Highlanders as ready as ever to fight, but he himself was no general. He occupied Perth, but he lay there for months doing nothing instead of falling on the royal army under Argyll, which was far smaller than his. The only move he made was to send a division of Highlanders under MacIntosh across the Forth. These threatened Edinburgh, but failed to take it. Then they marched southward and joined a small body of rebels raised by Forster on the border, and Kenmure from Dumfriesshire. After much doubt this handful, numbering at most 3000 men, some even without swords, resolved to invade England. They met with no support. No one would join a cause that looked so hopeless. They reached Preston, but were there surrounded by the king's forces under Carpenter and Willis. With the courage of despair they beat off the first attack, but as the town was burning around them they were driven to surrender.

Rising in
England.

This was an utter failure, but it becomes almost glorious when we compare it with the contemptible
 Battle of
 Sheriff-
 muir, 1715. doings of Mar. With 9000 men, a far larger force than ever Montrose handled, he at last made up his mind to

move against Argyll. The armies met at Sheriffmuir. Seeing that Mar had three to one, and further, that his Highlanders were better for a charge than even regular soldiers of the day, Argyll should have been swept away with ease. The Highlanders outflanked his left wing, broke it and chased it off the field; but on the right Argyll's men stood firm, while a small body of horse, crossing a marsh which was hard frozen, charged the Camerons and Stewarts on the flank and overthrew them. The battle now was in a curious state: each right wing was victorious. Mar's men, however, did not risk another attack, and the battle was left drawn. Still, all the fruits of victory were with Argyll. Nothing but success could have saved Mar, and with everything in his favour he had failed. Well might a clansman say as he watched the undecided fight, "O for one hour of Dundee".

The cause was lost. At the moment when it had become hopeless, the Pretender, James Edward, reached Scotland. It was mere mockery for him to call himself King James III. Mar's army was melting away daily, while King George's troops were being reinforced. Nothing was left for James but to leave the country again without striking a blow. Mar went with him, deserting his army. If he had not done so, his army would speedily have deserted him.

The "'Fifteen", as this rising was called, was a model of hopeless mismanagement. No one had any plans; no one seems ever to have really believed that it would succeed. Alone among Highland rebellions it has nothing notable about it. The Highlanders could generally be trusted to win a battle, to do some valiant deed; but the wavering of the leaders must have been shared by the clansmen. The muddle at Sheriffmuir was a fit ending to the whole enterprise.

Thirty years were to pass before the Jacobites made

George II,
1727-60.

another serious attempt. In these years the Hanoverian kings had strengthened their hold on the nation. Men were much less inclined to upset a government that had lasted thirty years than one that was new on the throne.

Walpole.

Sir Robert Walpole, the first English statesman who could fitly be called Prime Minister, had given the country almost thirty years of good and peaceful rule. He had pleased the Scots by bestowing the chief offices in Scotland on Scotsmen. The dislike of the Union was passing away as its benefits became more apparent. Further, Marshal Wade, who had been sent to command in Scotland after the "'Fifteen", had done much to quiet the Highlands by capturing arms, building forts, and making good roads through the mountains. Yet, in spite of all this, when the "'Forty-five" came, it was far more serious than the "'Fifteen", for the reason that it had a real leader.

The
'Forty-
Five,
1745-46.

One thing that had added to the hopelessness of Mar's rising was that Britain and France were at peace, and thus the Old Pretender could not get any help from the French power. In 1739, however, Britain went to war with Spain, and as Spain and France were allied, this soon led to a war with France. Thus the Pretender's son, Charles Edward—the Young Pretender, as the Hanoverians called him, Bonnie Prince Charlie of the Highlands—was encouraged to try once again to set up the House of Stewart. As it turned out he got no real aid from France; but he expected it, and this hope first led him to seek the Scottish shore.

Prince
Charles
Edward,
the Young
Pretender.

Prince Charles was young, pleasant in manner, good-looking, and energetic—a very different man from his father. Although the Highland chiefs were not at first willing to rise, some of them could not resist the prince's prayers. Cameron of Lochiel did not wish to join; he would not listen to any arguments. "Then," said Charles,



IX. THE OLD HOUSE OF COMMONS

(See Note on p. xv)

"let Lochiel, whom my father esteemed the best friend of our family, remain at home and learn from the newspapers the fate of his prince." "Not so," answered Lochiel, "I will go with you, and so shall everyone with whom I have influence." Soon a body of clansmen assembled, devoted to the young prince, who marched on foot as one of themselves. Sir John Cope started northward, intending to attack them, but finding the Highlanders holding the difficult pass of Corryarrick, went on his way towards Inverness. Charles promptly turned southwards. As he drew near Edinburgh the greatest alarm was felt in the town. There were no troops save two regiments of dragoons, so a body of volunteers was hastily enlisted; but when a march against the Highlanders was proposed the volunteers deserted by the score, flinging away their arms and darting down the wynds to escape. When the West Port was reached only forty-five men were still with the colours. These firmly refused to take one step outside the walls. As for the two dragoon regiments, they bolted without returning a shot, and began a mad flight which ended at North Berwick. The city itself was taken by a handful of fifty Camerons, who rushed in at the Netherbow Port as a coach was coming out.

Seizes
Edinburgh.

Meanwhile Cope had brought his men back by sea to Dunbar, and was preparing an attack on the capital. Charles marched out to meet him. For the whole of one day the armies lay face to face at Prestonpans, separated by a morass which neither could cross in the face of the enemy. At nightfall, however, Prince Charles heard of a path by which he could lead his men round Cope's left. Silently in the darkness the Highlanders filed off. In the misty daybreak they burst on Cope's forces, who had scarcely time to form a fresh front to meet them. It was Killiecrankie over again. The Highland claymores could

Rout of
Preston-
pans.

not be resisted. The battle did not last ten minutes. The dragoons at once broke and fled in panic. Of the infantry hardly two hundred escaped. The rest were killed or taken prisoner.

So far Prince Charles had prospered. The next step was more doubtful. He made up his mind to march into England. Here, however, the weakness of a Highland army became clear. Nothing was easier than to lead Highland troops to victory; nothing more difficult than to keep them together for a campaign. In this Montrose had failed, and Dundee's men had dispersed after one check. It was not likely that Charles would be more successful.

For a long time luck seemed with him. He entered England, took Carlisle, marched south through Lancashire, and even got so far as Derby. There, little more than a hundred miles from London, his officers forced him to turn back. Their little force of 5000 men was being hemmed in between the Duke of Cumberland and Marshal Wade, each with a larger army. Scarce an English recruit had joined them. "If the devil had come recruiting," said the Jacobite Duke of Perth, "they would have preferred him." The Highlanders fell back, beating off an attack of Cumberland's horse at Clifton, near Penrith. Since then, no fight has been fought on English soil.

Charles's chance, poor though it was, ended when he turned back at Derby; once again, however, he was to be mocked by fortune. Early in 1746 he routed General Hawley's force at Falkirk, but was unable to turn the victory to account. He retired northwards, Cumberland, at the head of the royal forces, leisurely following.

Culloden Moor, some five miles from Inverness, was to see the Stewarts strike their last blow. In the hope of repeating the surprise of Prestonpans, Lord George

Murray was sent to lead a night attack on Cumberland's camp. The troops marched slowly; dawn was approaching when no more than two-thirds of the way had been travelled. Weary and hungry, the Highlanders had to march back to Culloden. By midday Cumberland was upon them with double their numbers. The clans on the right and in the centre, galled by a cannonade which they could not return, charged wildly on the royal forces. They received a volley at close quarters, but managed to break the first line. The second line gave them another volley, and turned them. Meanwhile, on the left, the MacDonalds, angered that the place of honour on the right had not been given to them, hung back. The battle was lost. The Highlanders fled. Cumberland's horse pursued the fugitives for miles, cutting down stragglers.

We need not dwell on the romantic story of Prince Charles's escape, nor on the brutal conduct of the royal forces towards the Highlanders, which earned for Cumberland the title of the Butcher. What we have to notice is the effect of the " 'Fifteen " and the " 'Forty-five ". The double failure meant the extinction of the Jacobite cause. Nothing came out so clearly in the march to Derby as the fact that the great mass of the people of England did not want the Stewarts back. Many indeed had been ready to drink " to the king over the water "; very few were willing to risk anything by fighting for him. The downfall of the Jacobite cause had also an important effect on British party politics. Throughout the reigns of George I and George II the Whigs remained in power, because all Tories were distrusted; they were suspected of being Jacobites, disloyal to the house of Hanover. The next reign, however, saw this altered. George III took the Tories into favour, and kept them in their turn as his ministers for the greater part of his long reign.

Destruction of the
Jacobite
Cause.

Perhaps an even more important effect of the "Forty-five" was felt in the Highlands. Hitherto the Highlands had been a land apart in Great Britain. As the Treaty of Union had spared the ancient private law-courts, the Highland chiefs still had, like the old feudal nobles, absolute power even of life and death over their clansmen. The Lowlanders on the Highland border had no love of their Highland neighbours who were given to "lifting" the cattle of the farmers, who had accordingly to be very watchful of their property. After the rebellion the Government strove to put an end to the authority of the chiefs over their clans; by abolishing all heritable jurisdictions in Scotland, it took away their powers of judging their clansmen. The wearing of the tartan was forbidden. The Highlands came under the same law as the rest of Scotland. Finally, William Pitt hit on the happy idea of using Highland valour against the nation's enemies. He raised Highland regiments from the clans, set their chiefs to command them, and these soon became as valuable to George III as they had been dangerous to George II. Thus by degrees the Highlands were reduced to order; robbery and cattle lifting from lowland farms ceased; Highlander and Lowlander lived quietly side by side; and Scotland, as a whole, gained in peace and security.

Pacifica-
tion of the
Highlands.

CHAPTER 30

THE GROWTH OF THE EMPIRE IN THE
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. WILLIAM PITT

The middle of the eighteenth century was filled by three great wars, in which Britain took part. These are the War of the Austrian Succession (1739-48), the Seven Years' War (1756-63), and the American War (1775-83). On the other side there fought in the first war France, Spain, Prussia, Bavaria; in the second, France, Spain, Austria, Russia, Saxony; in the third, France, Spain, Holland, and our revolted American colonies. This variety of enemies seems to point to Britain's being unusually quarrelsome. What is the cause of this combativeness?

The Wars
of the
Eighteenth
Century.

The answer is given by two facts. In the first place, the kings of Britain were also rulers of Hanover, and this possession entangled us in every war that went on in Germany. But the second is more important. We notice that France and Spain fought against us in all the wars. Here is the true explanation. Britain was really carrying on the long struggle with France which had begun with William III, the object of which was colonial. Spain was also a great colonial power, and became involved since she was the ally of France, having a king of the same Bourbon family. The other powers were drawn in also as allies of France, which was engaged in great schemes of conquest in Europe. Thus Britain, to aid her plans of mastering the French in America and India, joined in against France in the European wars.

A Pro-
longed
Struggle
against
France.

Thus, in following the story of the growth of the British empire during this time, we may neglect what

Pitt, the
"Great
Com-
moner".

happens on the Continent, in order to fix our eyes on what takes place at sea, or in America, or in India, These, and not the battlefields of Germany, are the real scenes of British interests. When in the Seven Years' War an English statesman sent money to our ally, Frederick of Prussia, saying "I will conquer America in Germany", he meant that he would keep France's hands so full with wars in Europe that she would not have men or ships to be able to resist British troops in the New World or the Indies. This far-seeing man was William Pitt the elder. Since his was the master-hand that did most at this time to make British policy colonial, and so to build up the British Empire, it is well to see something of the man himself before we try to understand his work.

William Pitt first made a name for himself by his attacks on Walpole; but as he also took every chance of speaking against Hanover and the king's fondness for that country, King George II hated him, and for a long time refused to have him as a minister. Pitt did not care. His first duty was to the people, not to the crown. The king dismissed him from office, but the country was determined to have him back again. They were right. "No one ever," it was said, "entered Pitt's room who did not come out of it a braver man." He was made Secretary of State in 1757, when the Seven Years' War was going against us everywhere. "I know I can save the country," he said proudly, "and no one else can." Pitt had a wonderful power of choosing the best admirals and generals; he saw at once what men were fit for; he never allowed rank or age to influence him; all he looked at was merit. Almost in an instant failure was changed into success. In 1757 Lord Chesterfield wrote: "I am sure that we are undone, both at home and abroad. We are no longer a nation"; but in 1759, so fast did the victories come one after another, that men called it the *Annus Mirabilis*,

“the Wonderful Year”, and Horace Walpole declared that it was needful to ask each day what the latest victory was, for fear of missing one. Pitt’s administration only lasted four years, but no other has ever been so glorious. Everywhere men crowded to see the “Great Commoner”, as he was called, and wondered at the stern face and haughty look of the man who had raised Britain to such greatness.

Remembering, then, that it was to Pitt that we mainly owe the determination to get the better of France in the task of making our empire, we may turn to see how the task was carried out. We shall have to see what was done (1) in India, (2) in America, (3) at sea.

I.—THE WINNING OF THE INDIAN EMPIRE

Our empire in India, like most of our possessions abroad, was founded by the enterprise of merchants. In Elizabeth’s reign a charter had been granted to the East India Company, giving it the sole right to trade to India. It had sent ships, built trading stations called factories, and obtained leave from Indian rulers to traffic in their dominions; it had had many quarrels with Dutch traders and French traders, who also were building factories and striving to get all the trade into their own hands; but for the first hundred years of its existence it had no wish to acquire territory. No one dreamed of conquering India as a whole.

About this time, however, an important discovery was made. It was that Indians, if trained on European methods and led by European officers, made excellent soldiers. A Frenchman named Dupleix was the first to turn this to good account. He raised a large force of “Sepoys”, as these Indian soldiers were called, took Madras from the British, and threatened to drive us from Southern

The East
India
Company.

Dupleix
and the
Sepoys.

India. Besides this, he turned his arms against Indian princes, deposing those who favoured the British and putting friends of his own in their places.

Using Sepoys, however, was a game that two could play at. There was an Englishman in India who soon showed that he could beat Dupleix with his own weapons. This was a clerk in the Company's service named Robert Clive. With a handful of 500 men he marched upon the town of Arcot in 1751. The defenders fled at the sight of his troops. He fortified himself there, and was at once besieged by Dupleix with 10,000 men. For fifty days his little force held out against every assault. So devoted were Clive's Sepoys to their British leader that when food ran short they offered to give their share of rice to the Europeans, saying that the water in which it was boiled would be enough for themselves. At last Dupleix retired in despair. This defence of Arcot saved the British power in the South of India.

New work was soon ready for Clive's hand. The Nawab of Bengal, Surajah Dowlah, had marched on Calcutta, taken prisoner all the Europeans, and thrust them into the dungeon since called the Black Hole of Calcutta. One hundred and forty-six were put in; but so fearful was the heat in the tiny space, and so terrible the struggle to get water from the guards at the window, that next morning only twenty-three came out alive. Clive's vengeance came swiftly. He marched against Surajah Dowlah, and met him at Plassey. It was another example of how formidable Europeans and Sepoys could be to an untrained Asiatic host. The Nawab's men were 53,000 to Clive's 3000, but they were utterly beaten. The Nawab was dethroned, and a friend of the Company put in his place. Clive did much for India besides winning battles; he prevented the Company's officials trading for themselves and taking bribes; he introduced a purer system

of administration, under which the natives of India by degrees came to recognize that a Briton's word was as good as his bond. But what is most remarkable about him is that he definitely started the Company on the policy of interfering among Indian princes in order to acquire territory.

In the ranks of Clive's army at Plassey had been one who was to carry Clive's policy much further. This was Warren Hastings. In 1773 the British Government began to think that our settlement in India, which had led to so much fighting between us and the French, ought to be under the control of Parliament. So they appointed Warren Hastings to be the first governor-general. Hastings extended the authority of the Company in all directions. He waged war on the Mahrattas; he had a long struggle with Hyder Ali, who was threatening to destroy British power in the south, and at last overcame him. Even in the time of the disastrous American War, when Britain could send him no aid, he held his own stoutly against the French. He was not always scrupulous in the way he obtained money, and for this he was impeached when he came home. But after a seven years' trial, in which most of the great orators of the day spoke against him, he was acquitted.

The period of Clive and Hastings, then, saw the real establishment of British power in India. Before them, the Company was a body of traders, afraid of the Indian princes, bent on pleasing them in order to get liberties of trade, still terrified of its rivals, the French. After them, the power of the French had fallen in the dust, and the Company was now as powerful as any Indian ruler, with as wide territories and as large a revenue, and a better army. It was obvious that what had been done in Bengal and the Carnatic could be done again all over India. One by one Indian rulers would fall before the

Warren
Hastings.

Great
Power of
the Com-
pany.

Company, and it by degrees would become master of the whole. This is what actually came to pass.

II.—THE RISE AND FALL OF OUR FIRST AMERICAN COLONIES

The story of the beginning of our American colonies **America.** is like that of our Indian empire in one respect, namely, that the work was at first almost entirely that of private persons, or trading companies acting under a charter from the crown. In all else it was different. India was thickly peopled, and divided up under powerful native princes; the climate is unsuited to Europeans; European children cannot live there. In America, on the other hand, the natives, the Redskins, were few in number; they were savages, and although cruel and bloodthirsty they were not difficult to drive out; the climate was temperate and suited to white men. But everything had to be begun from the beginning. Land had to be cleared and cultivated, houses built, roads made, and settlers tempted over from the Old World.

The British colonies in America had been settled at different times with different objects. Virginia, founded **Founda-
lions of the
Colonies.** in 1607, was the oldest; Georgia, founded in 1732, the youngest. The New England States—Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and New Hampshire—had been peopled by Puritans, the first founders of the colony, “the Pilgrim Fathers”, having left England in James I’s day in order to find a home where they could worship as they pleased. Indeed religious troubles had much to do with the foundations of the colonies. Maryland had given a shelter to Catholics, Pennsylvania was a refuge for the Quakers. All these were under governors appointed by the crown, but as a rule the British Government interfered with them very little.

Thus in George II's reign the eastern coast of what is now the United States was occupied by a set of British possessions. Westwards they were limited by the Alleghany Mountains; in the north the French held Canada. Far away in the south was another French post at the mouth of the Mississippi. A grave question now arose: to which power was the interior of the continent to fall? The French began to build forts on the head-waters of the river Ohio, intending to shut in the British and claim the west for themselves. A British expedition was sent to take these forts, but, falling into an ambush, was routed near Fort Duquesne by the French and their Indian allies. This was in 1755.

There is one very striking thing about this battle. Like the defence of Arcot (1751), it took place at a time when Britain and France were at peace with each other. Nothing shows more clearly the unceasing rivalry in colonial matters that was going on between the two nations. Peace existed only in Europe. In India and America the struggle went on steadily.

Pitt saw that a blow must be struck. He chose James Wolfe to strike it. Although Wolfe was but thirty-three, he had been nineteen years in the army, and had won the rank of lieutenant-colonel. In 1758 he aided General Amherst to take Louisburg from the French, strongly fortified as it was. The next year he sailed up the St. Lawrence to attack Quebec. The town lies between the rivers St. Lawrence and St. Charles. Precipices rise from the river banks to the Heights of Abraham behind it. A French general, Montcalm, was there to defend it with a large force. Men said Wolfe was mad to attack it. "I wish he would bite some of the other generals, then," said old George II, who understood Wolfe's courage. For three months Wolfe could do nothing. At last, embarking his men in boats, he brought them under

Wolfe takes Quebec, 1759.

cover of night to where the precipices of the Heights of Abraham frown over the river. He had heard of a narrow dangerous path. Silently the men climbed it in the darkness. When day broke, Wolfe's army was drawn up for battle on the open ground at the top. Montcalm led out the French to drive Wolfe back into the river, but his men could not resist the regular and accurate fire of the British. In the moment of victory Wolfe himself was struck by three balls. He lived long enough to hear that the French were beaten. "Now God be praised!" he cried; "I will die in peace." Quebec surrendered. Canada was taken from the French, and by the Treaty of Paris in 1763 passed into British hands.

**Colonial
Discon-
tent.** British power was now supreme in America; the next war, however, was to see most of it disappear. So long as the French held Canada our American colonists feared them too much to wish to cast off British rule, for to rebel against Britain would have meant falling into the hands of France. This check being removed, the colonists grew dissatisfied. They complained that Britain hampered their trade. This was true, for British commercial policy at this time thought it right to destroy any trade in the colonies which might rival a home industry. Thus the colonists were not allowed to manufacture iron goods—nails, knives, and such like—for fear they might injure British ironworkers; they might not make beaver hats, but had to send the beaver to England to be made up, and then had to buy British-made hats. Even colonial produce, such as sugar and tobacco, had to be sent straight to Britain, in order that the merchants at home might be able to buy cheap. These rules were part of what was called the Mercantile System, by which everything was to be sacrificed to keep British merchants and manufacturers prosperous.

The colonists thus felt that Britain gave them little,



BRITISH AND FRENCH COLONIES IN NORTH AMERICA

and took a great deal. The British Government, on the other hand, felt that the colonists would neither do enough nor pay enough for their own protection, and in 1765, by the Stamp Act, laid a tax on the colonies to meet

Proposals to tax the Colonies, 1765 and 1767.

the cost of their defence. The colonists protested that they had been taxed by a Parliament in which they had no representatives, and the tax was withdrawn, only to be replaced in 1767 by another, on tea, paper, glass and painter's colours. The colonists refused to use the taxed goods; the government again yielded and withdrew all the taxes except a small tax on tea. No one would buy the taxed tea; in 1773 a party of colonists disguised as Indians boarded the tea ships and emptied £18,000 worth of tea into Boston harbour. Riots broke out in which lives were lost; in 1775 a determined attack was made on a British column at Lexington. Britain and her colonies had drifted into war.

The War of American Independence lasted seven years. The British generals were bad; many of the troops that were sent out were Hessians hired from Germany; the country was so vast that as soon as rebellion seemed crushed in one place, it burst out afresh in another. At first the British won most of the battles, though they had to fight hard for them; but the colonists were determined not to give in, and they had a general, George Washington, who, even when his men were short of arms and powder, shoeless and half starving, yet managed always to make progress against the British. Help came to him against Britain from an old British foe. France saw a chance to revenge herself for the loss of Canada; in 1778 she entered into an alliance with the colonies. Cornwallis, the British general, had entrenched himself at Yorktown, trusting to get supplies by sea; but a French fleet appeared, drove off the British ships and blockaded his army. Washington closed in round him on land. Cornwallis had at last to yield. This was a death-blow to British power. Soon after, by the Treaty of Versailles, signed in 1783, we were compelled to acknowledge the United States to be independent.

War of
American
Independence,
1775-83.

Washington.

Yorktown,
1781.

So went our first great colony. After the first bitterness of defeat was over, men took it surprisingly calmly. They thought it was natural: "colonies", it was said, "were like pears; they would fall when they were ripe". But we shall find that this view has proved false. Our American colonies were lost because they were governed on a bad principle: but we have learned by experience to manage colonies on a better plan, and now the colonies and dominions, if not more firmly joined to their mother country, are at least on more easy and friendly terms with her than they have ever been.

III.—THE BRITISH POWER AT SEA

If now we turn to what was done at sea during these three wars, we find a mixture of success and failure. Anson. Many brilliant things were done. In 1740 Anson started with a squadron to attack the Spanish possessions in the Pacific. He imitated Drake's great exploits, attacking and plundering towns, seizing Spanish treasure-ships, and returned home after four years' absence, bringing with him a million and a quarter in treasure. In 1759 Hawke won perhaps the most daring battle ever fought by a British commander. The French fleet had drawn in for shelter into Quiberon Bay, on the western coast of France. Quiberon Bay, 1759. The bay is full of rocks and shoals; a wild November gale was blowing; to add to other difficulties night had fallen. Hawke dashed in among the Frenchmen, and made short work of them. Most were taken, burnt, or driven on shore. Hawke only lost forty men. Our fleet gave another proof of its importance on the outbreak of war with Spain in 1762. Manilla and Havana were immediately taken from the Spaniards, and the Plate fleet captured, one ship carrying treasure worth £800,000.

On the other hand, there are some failures to set

against these exploits. There were many indecisive actions; one in 1744 led to a number of accusations against the officers in command, and to a court martial, in which an admiral and nine captains were dismissed from the service. A worse thing yet was to come. At the beginning of the Seven Years' War, Admiral Byng, being sent to relieve Minorca, met a French fleet stronger than his own. He fought it in a very half-hearted way, and retreated. Minorca was lost, and Byng was brought to trial for misconduct, and shot. Voltaire said, "In England they have shot one of their admirals in order to encourage the others." In the War of American Independence we have already seen how de Grasse's fleet cut off Cornwallis, and caused his surrender at Yorktown.

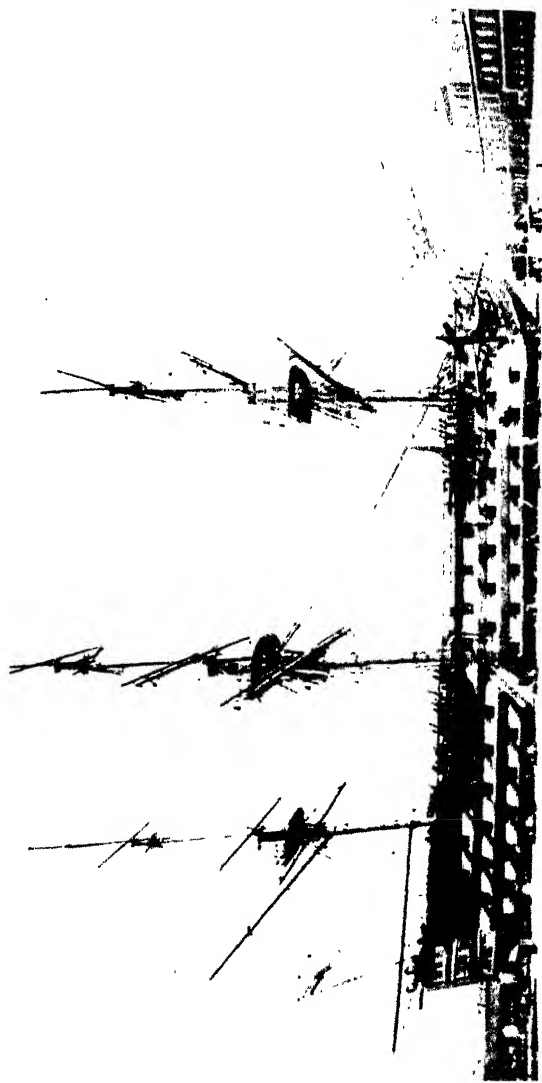
Byng, 1757.

Defence of
Gibraltar,
1779-82.

For the greater part of that war, indeed, the British navy was not at its best. It did not appear to be able to strike a hard blow: it could wound, but not kill. The French took many of our West Indian islands; for three years Gibraltar was besieged, and though Governor Eliott's defence of it never wavered, though he drove off every attack by showering red-hot shot on the enemy's ships and setting them on fire, yet the mere fact that French and Spanish fleets should be able to engage in such a siege almost uninterrupted, seems discreditable to the British navy. Clearly it had not the command of the sea which we expect it to have nowadays.

One fact may well serve as a lesson—that the war in which our sea-power wavers will be disastrous. France had much improved her navy, while ours had been allowed to stand still; the result was that, fighting with fleets superior in numbers, in tonnage, and in guns, our admirals often failed to do anything decisive.

At last, however, when Britain was in the depths of despair, when America was gone, and when most of our West Indian colonies had been taken, a man was found



X. NELSON'S "VICTORY" IN DRY DOCK AT PORTSMOUTH

(See Note on p. xv)

to finish the war with a victory. Rodney met the French fleet off Dominica, and shattered it; the French admiral, de Grasse, was captured on his own flagship, which was reckoned to be the finest ship afloat.

Rodney's
Victory of
12th April,
1782.

This battle enabled us to make a much better peace than we should otherwise have done, but it has another and a much greater importance. The naval battles of the day had been indecisive, because the idea had been to lay the British ships alongside the French *in line*. What usually happened was this. As the British fleet filed by the French, each vessel received the fire of every French vessel in turn, and generally got its rigging cut up. When at last the two fleets were in position, van to van, centre to centre, rear to rear, and the British admiral was hoping for a good battle of hard pounding, the French fleet would draw off. The British ships, with rigging cut about, could not pursue. Thus battles were indecisive. The British would boast that the French had run; the French, that the British were too much crippled to follow.

Naval
Tactics.

Rodney, however, adopted a different plan. He broke through the French line, and laid all his ships on both sides of the rear of the French fleet, thus getting it between two fires, while the French van had no enemy to attack. Thus his battle was decisive, for a number of French ships were overpowered before their comrades could come to their assistance. It gave our admirals what they had long desired—a chance of making the slippery Frenchmen stay and fight it out to the end—and in a real battle the British fleets always triumphed. This plan of attacking in column and breaking the enemy's line was to lead to great results in the next war. It was employed by Nelson at Trafalgar.

Breaking
the Line.

One other naval exploit remains to be noticed, the more striking since at the time people thought little or

**Australia,
1770.** nothing of it. The same year which saw the beginning of Lord North's government that was destined to lose us our American colonies, saw Captain Cook take possession of Australia and New Zealand in the name of King George. No one then understood the value of Cook's discovery; no one imagined that on the shores of the great southern island there would arise cities rivalling those of America; no one dreamed of the gold of Victoria and West Australia, or the sheep-runs of New South Wales; no one realized that a fresh continent had been secured for the British race. These things were hidden in the future. Yet thus, while one dominion was being lost, another was silently and almost imperceptibly added to replace it.

CHAPTER 31

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION. REVOLUTIONARY AND NAPOLEONIC WARS

**Revolutionary
and Napoleonic
Wars,
1793-1815.** With two short intervals Britain was continuously at war with France from 1793 to 1815, and this war ended the prolonged struggle that had begun under William III and Marlborough, and had gone on with little cessation all through the eighteenth century. It was by far the greatest of Britain's wars. Alike by sea and land Britain made war on a larger scale than she had ever done before, with more ships and more men. It cost far more than any previous war; for not only had Britain to pay for her own vast fleet and the armies that drove the French out of Spain and finally conquered Napoleon at Waterloo, but she also gave enormous sums to her allies who were struggling against Napoleon on the Continent. Thus, in

the twenty-two years of the war, the National Debt increased to almost four times its previous amount, and at the end stood at the gigantic figure of nine hundred million pounds. But if much was spent in lives and money, much was gained. Although Napoleon and his victorious armies successively entered every capital on the Continent except Constantinople, Britain alone defied him. And when the end of the war came it found Britain strained by the great efforts she had made, but not exhausted; unconquered and unconquerable; firmly established as the mistress of the sea and the one great colonial power.

National
Debt.

In the course of the war five periods deserve special notice. These are (1) the events of the years 1797 and 1798; (2) the battle of Trafalgar in 1805; (3) the British invasion of Spain; (4) Napoleon's expedition to Russia in 1812; (5) the battle of Waterloo in 1815. Of these the first two are naval events; the last three military.

1. Britain began the war with France partly from commercial reasons, partly because her ally, Holland, was attacked, and partly out of disgust at the violence of the Jacobin or extreme French revolutionary party. It was a disgust which changed to horror and anger when the Jacobins caused their king, Louis XVI, and his wife, Marie Antoinette, to be put to death by the guillotine—actions which were little else than murders. But the French, though attacked on all sides, showed extraordinary vigour in driving out their enemies. They won battle after battle; they compelled Prussia and Austria to beg for peace; they had even made Spain and Holland join with them and give them the assistance of their fleets; and in 1797 Britain alone was left still fighting.

Causes of
the War.

The year was a very black one, for in the spring of it our navy, on which we relied, mutinied. First at Spithead and then the Nore, the fleets lay idle, the sailors

Mutiny of
the Navy.

declaring they would fight no more till their grievances were redressed. It is true that two months earlier Admiral Jervis, with fourteen ships of the line, had shattered a combined French and Spanish fleet of twenty-seven vessels. But France had another maritime ally, Holland. **St. Vincent, 1797.** The Dutch fleet had been held blockaded by Admiral Duncan. But when our fleets mutinied it did not seem that this blockade could be maintained. The Dutch might break out, join the French, seize the Channel, and a French army might be landed in England. Duncan managed to deceive the Dutch. He kept a frigate or two cruising in sight of land, making signals as if to a blockading fleet outside. The Dutch did not know that the blockading fleet was not there—that it really was lying mutinous and idle. But time was gained. The sailors' demands for better pay, better food, and better treatment were granted. **Camperdown, 1797.** The fleet again put to sea before the slow Dutch made a move. When they came out Duncan defeated them at Camperdown.

Jervis's second in command at St. Vincent was the son of a Norfolk clergyman, Horatio Nelson. **Nelson.** He was to show that he could do greater things yet for Britain. His chance soon came. In 1798 Napoleon Bonaparte, the most brilliant of the French generals, was sent with a French expedition to Egypt. The French fleet got safely to Egypt, but Nelson found it lying in Aboukir Bay, in a place where the French admiral judged that he would be safe from any attack, since he had placed his ships so near to a shoal that it seemed impossible for the British ships to get between him and the land. To Nelson, at the head of a fleet, nothing was impossible. By a magnificent piece of seamanship some of the British ships rounded the extremity of the French line, while the rest anchored on the other side, placing the French between two fires. **Battle of the Nile, 1798.** In the evening the fight began. It raged all night. In the middle

of the darkness the French flagship *L'Orient* burst into flames, and eventually blew up with all hands. When morning came all the French ships save four had been taken or sunk. The French power in the Mediterranean was broken. Napoleon, leaving his army marooned in Syria, returned to France, to become in 1799 First Consul and in 1804 Emperor.

2. Trafalgar relieved us from a danger nearer home. When, after a year of uneasy peace, war broke out again in 1803, Napoleon gathered an army of 130,000 men at Boulogne, ready to invade England. Hosts of flat-bottomed boats were prepared to carry them across, and the troops were so constantly drilled at embarking that the task was only an affair of minutes. "Let us," said Napoleon, "but be masters of the Straits for six hours, and we shall be masters of the world." But those six hours' mastery he was never to gain.

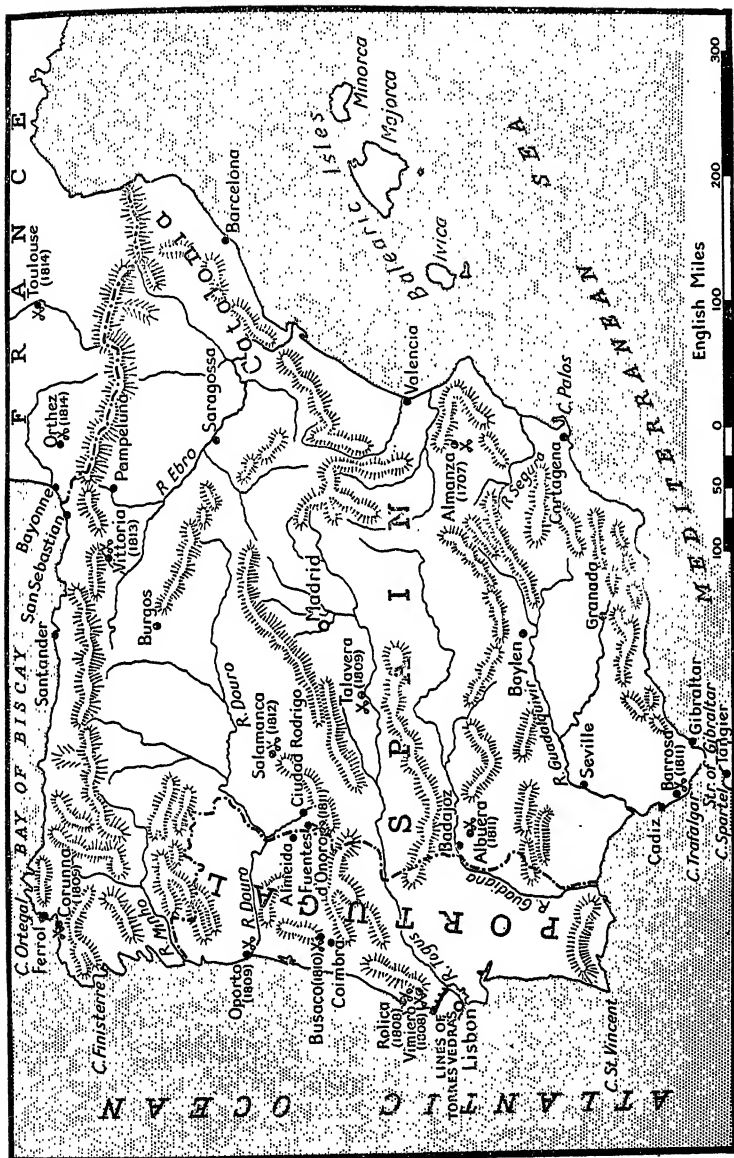
Napoleon's
Plan for
Invasion.

France was not without ships; indeed, could she only mass her own with those of her ally, Spain, she would have had a formidable fleet; but the ships lay blockaded in many separate harbours—Toulon, Rochefort, Brest, Ferrol, Cadiz. Napoleon formed an ingenious plan. His admiral, Villeneuve, was to dash out of Toulon the first time a storm drove off the British blockading fleet, and sail for the West Indies. Nelson would be sure to follow. Villeneuve, however, was not to fight him; he was to give him the slip, hasten back across the Atlantic, set free the imprisoned French ships at Brest, and thus, with a united fleet, hurry to Boulogne and give Napoleon the command of the Channel. The first part of the plan succeeded. Villeneuve avoided Nelson, and, leaving him in the West Indies, returned to Europe. But on his way back he had to fight a British fleet under Calder, and though he was not seriously defeated, he turned aside and put into Cadiz, where he was at once

blockaded. Napoleon's chance of invading England was gone.

He never had another. On the 21st of October, 1805, Trafalgar, Nelson met the allied French and Spanish fleet off Cape Trafalgar. As the British fleet drifted slowly down in two columns against the allied line, he made that famous signal that will always be remembered by all English-speaking races: "England expects that every man will do his duty"—and nobly every man did it. The enemy's fleet was destroyed, but the victory was won at the cost of Nelson's life. He was struck on the quarter-deck of his flagship, the *Victory*, by a musket-ball from the French ship, the *Redoutable*, and died soon after. But his work was done. Never again during the war was the British command of the sea in danger; never again were we threatened with the horrors of a foreign invasion.

3. While our sailors had been winning so much renown, our soldiers had done very little. They did not lack bravery, but they were badly led, or else sent to places where they could do no good. Their turn came when in 1808 Wellington (Sir Arthur Wellesley, as he then was) went to command the British army in Portugal. He defeated one French marshal after another. When compelled to retreat after an advance into the heart of Spain, he retired to the lines of Torres Vedras, a fortified camp from which French armies far larger than his could not expel him. He renewed his advance and step by step drove the French through Spain towards their own frontier. He showed that British soldiers, when well led, were the equal of any soldiers in the world, and that even the French, so long victorious, could not resist the men who advanced to storm the steep and shot-swept breaches in the great fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo with *unloaded* muskets. Picton's order had been, "No powder. We'll do this thing with cold iron." It was done.



SPAIN AND PORTUGAL—TO ILLUSTRATE PENINSULAR WAR

In the course of five campaigns Wellington cleared Spain, and in the spring of 1814 the British were in turn invading France.

4. The war in Spain, which Napoleon called "the Spanish ulcer", to such an extent did it eat away his power, was not the only disaster he had met. In 1812 he had led an army of half a million soldiers—his Grand Army—into Russia. The Russians retired before him, and he reached Moscow. There, to his surprise, the Russians did not ask for peace. He was forced to retreat over the same country which his army had laid waste in his advance. His men could find neither food nor shelter. The Russians followed on his traces, and gave his men no rest. The Cossack horsemen cut off the stragglers. Then the winter came on, with snow and bitter frosts, more deadly than Russian cannon, sharper and more pitiless than Cossack lances. The wretched French froze to death round their very camp-fires. Not one in ten of the army escaped. Napoleon's veterans were gone; and after another year's fighting in Germany he was driven by combined Russian, Austrian, and Prussian forces to retreat into France.

5. At last, in the spring of 1814, he was compelled to abdicate, and went into exile on Elba, a small island between Corsica and the mainland of Italy. In the late autumn the representatives of the victorious allies met in Vienna, to make a settlement which, in spite of its many faults, preserved peace in Europe for almost half a century. One great battle, however, had still to be fought. Early in 1815 Napoleon escaped to France. The veterans of his earlier campaigns, released from their prisons in Russia, Germany, and Britain, flocked to his standard, ready once more for a career of conquest. It was felt that such an enemy to the peace of Europe must be crushed, this time for ever.

Napoleon's
Russian
Campaign.

Abdication
of Napo-
leon, 1814.

Wellington was dispatched to Belgium, to take command of a hastily assembled force, of which barely a third was British, and to co-operate with a Prussian army under Marshal Blücher. Napoleon knew that while he had more men than either Blücher or Wellington, their combined forces far outnumbered his; he therefore planned to thrust his army between the British and the Prussians, and defeat each in turn. He began well: he beat Blücher at Ligny, and advanced to attack Wellington. The two great generals had never met before. On 18th June, 1815, their armies stood face to face at Waterloo. Napoleon was confident of the result: he knew that his army outnumbered Wellington's motley forces, and he believed that the Prussians had been not only defeated, but routed. He did not know that, though still many miles away, Blücher's army was hurrying westward with unbroken ranks, or that its indomitable old commander had promised Wellington that he would be at Waterloo before nightfall. Wellington knew that if victory came at all, it would be a near thing: many of his foreign troops were unreliable, many of his British troops half-trained militiamen, but he had promised Blücher to stand fast, and he, like Blücher, was a man of his word. All day the British infantry regiments lay in a thin red line behind the crest of a low ridge, enduring the storm of shot and shell, or stood up to form square and drive back the French cavalry. Charge after charge was beaten off, and still the French swarmed to the attack. In the afternoon the Prussian forces arrived from the east; a little before nightfall the Prussian vanguard began its attack on the enemy's right. Wellington gave the word to his troops to advance in their turn, and the French were overthrown. Napoleon was conquered at last.

It has been said that at Waterloo Britain fought for

The Fruits of Victory. The victory; at Trafalgar for existence. The fruits of these battles may at first sight seem hardly worth the effort made to gather them: of our conquests from France and her allies we retained in Europe only Malta and Heligoland; in other parts of the globe Ceylon, the Cape of Good Hope, part of Dutch Guiana, Mauritius, and one or two sugar islands in the West Indies. Far more important than these gains of territory was the establishment of a supremacy at sea, a supremacy which would guarantee our merchant ships and our traders free and unimpeded access to every continent.

CHAPTER 32

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Increase in Population. Perhaps the greatest feature in British history in the second half of the eighteenth century is one which is often passed over very lightly. We think a good deal of Wolfe's conquest of Quebec and of Clive's deeds in India. These, indeed, meant the expansion of our empire abroad. But we must not lose sight of something even more remarkable—the expansion of our population at home. It had declined sharply in the second half of the fourteenth century, as a result of the Black Death; that decline was followed by an almost imperceptible increase. Even at the end of Queen Elizabeth's reign there were little more than four million people in England and Wales. Slowly the numbers increased, to five million at the outbreak of the Civil War, to five and a half million in the reign of Queen Anne, to six and a half million in 1750. But before the end of the eighteenth century the population had swelled to nine million; it rose to ten

million in 1811, and to almost fourteen million in 1831. In Scotland the same inexplicable increase had taken place—from a little over a million in 1750 to one million and two-thirds in 1801 and two millions and a third in 1831. In Ireland the increase was even more startling—from two million at the beginning of the eighteenth century to four million at the end of it.

We have called this increase inexplicable, but it can be explained in part. Something had happened to reduce the appalling infant mortality. Before 1750 the odds were against a child's growing up to manhood, even if he were the carefully tended son of wealthy parents. The great historian Edward Gibbon, for example, who was born in 1737, tells us that he had "five brothers and one sister, all of whom were snatched away in their infancy". But doctors were discovering how to fight some of the most deadly diseases. Dr. Jenner's introduction of vaccination at the end of the century saved thousands from death by smallpox; and ordinary people, like the parents of Sir Walter Scott, when they left the dark little flat in a malodorous wynd in the Old Town of Edinburgh, where six of their children had perished, were beginning to realize that there must be some connexion between dirt and disease.

Improvement in Health.

The population of England had doubled between 1750 and 1830, but the country remained the same size. How, then, were the people to be fed? In Ireland and the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, the inhabitants lived on an unvarying diet of potatoes; they were half-starved at the best; if by an evil chance a blight were to destroy the potato crop, they would starve altogether.

In England and central Scotland a change big enough to be called a revolution had taken place since the middle of the eighteenth century. Great stretches of land hitherto deemed unfit for cultivation were brought under the

Agriculture before 1750.

plough—two million acres altogether, it was calculated, between 1700 and 1800. At the same time methods of cultivation improved out of all recognition. At the beginning of the century the mediæval three-field system was still the rule in the midlands and south of England.

**The Three
Field
System.**

The bulk of the arable land near the village was divided into three great unfenced fields, one of which was allowed to lie fallow every year, since the old-fashioned farmer argued, if you grew cereal crops continuously, without ever allowing the land to rest, you would soon exhaust the soil completely. The old-fashioned farmer had not much time for rest himself, for the thirty acres or so which he cultivated with the help of his family and an occasional hired labourer were arranged in ten or twenty widely separated strips in each of the three great fields. In addition he was entitled to graze his sheep and cows on the common pastures. In the north of England and

**Infield
and Out-
field.**

in Scotland another and more primitive system prevailed; on the little farms the richer land, the "infield", was never allowed to lie fallow, but was heavily manured and cropped every year; patches of the poorer land, the "outfield", were cleared and cultivated for a year or two, and then allowed to revert to waste. In north and south alike the peasant farmer did not keep his cattle in enclosed fields, but left them to roam with the cattle of his neighbours in the unenclosed common pasture. Many of these small farmers were freeholders, the owners of the land which they cultivated; many were tenants, holding their land on a lease, and paying an annual rent for it to the squire at the manor house.

These small farmers were not the only occupants of the eighteenth-century English village. There were some who might cultivate only three or four acres; others with only a thatched hut and a garden plot and a cow or two, which, by immemorial custom, they were allowed

to graze on the common pasture, beside their hens and geese. Some of these landless or nearly landless folk earned a living by working as hired labourers; others, more comfortably off, plied the ancient village trades of wheelwright or carpenter, miller or smith.

But this system was wasteful in the extreme. The improving farmer knew that there was no need for one-third of the arable land to lie waste every year; if root crops and artificial grasses were introduced the whole of it could be kept under continuous cultivation. Grasses, like clover and lucerne, would provide his cattle with better summer feeding, while turnips would enable him to keep them in good condition all through the winter. Soil that had gone sour, he knew, could be restored by scattering lime on it, and drains would enable him to grow heavy crops on his waterlogged acres. But his knowledge could profit him nothing as long as his thirty one-acre strips were interlocked with those of his less enterprising neighbours. And improvements meant money—far more than a peasant farmer had at his disposal.

The first move in the agricultural revolution was made, not by the farmer, but by the landowner. He thought that money spent on improving his land would be profitably invested, but he saw only too clearly that no profit would be obtained if he tried to fit the new methods into the old system. The one-acre strips scattered up and down the three open fields must be arranged in a new pattern of a small number of big farms. He must therefore persuade the other big landowners in the parish to petition Parliament for a private Enclosure Act. Once the Enclosure Act was obtained—and such Acts were passed by the hundred in the second half of the eighteenth century—the rearrangement of the lands of the parish was speedily carried through. To each proprietor

Proposed
improvements.

Enclosures.

who could prove his claim was allotted the equivalent of his original holding of arable land, combined with the equivalent of his share in the common pasture. He received it in the form of a compact block of land, which he had to enclose at his own expense. But where definite proof was not forthcoming no grant of land was made. Many a cottager found himself deprived of pasture for his cow because he could not prove that he had a right to graze it on the village common.

The change made life, not less, but more difficult for the peasant proprietor with no capital behind him, no landlord to fence and drain his fields for him and keep his house in good repair. The almost universal increase in the poor rate after 1795 handicapped him still further, because it meant that he had to contribute more towards parish relief. The money which his wife and daughters could earn at the spinning-wheel in the farmhouse kitchen might enable him to cultivate his unprofitable acres for a few years longer, but when that source of supply failed he would be compelled to sell his farm, and migrate to the town, or stay on in the village as a landless labourer, working for one of the new tenant farmers at a wage of a few shillings a week. For, as the small proprietor declined, the tenant farmer grew in importance. The big landowner did not farm the whole of his lands himself; he confined his attention to the park and the home farm, and leased the remainder, divided into farms of several hundred acres, to tenants who paid him an annual rent. He did for them what they could not do for themselves—built and kept in repair the farmhouse, sheds, and stables, drained and fenced the fields, set up kilns to supply them with lime, and threshing-mills which in an hour had threshed the corn that with their flails “ten day-labourers could not end”. The rent per acre was much higher than under the old system, and the landowner

Decline
of the
Peasant
Proprietor.

Rise of the
Tenant
Farmer.

did not hesitate to raise it when he renewed the lease, for he knew full well that with their farms producing more, and the price of foodstuffs soaring up, his tenants could pay and still live almost as comfortably as he did himself.

So landlord and tenant grew wealthy together, secure in the knowledge that as long as the war with Napoleon lasted they need not fear that the importation of foreign grain would force down prices. When the war did end, and prices began to fall, Parliament saved the situation by clapping a duty of eighty shillings a quarter on imported wheat. The tenant farmer enjoyed another advantage: the increase in the population made labour plentiful and cheap. He could therefore force wages down to starvation level, knowing that if his labourers rebelled he could fill their places at once. But they could not be allowed to starve altogether. In 1795 the Berkshire magistrates, meeting at Speenhamland, discussed whether they should enforce the payment of an adequate wage, or supplement the existing inadequate wage by grants from the rates. Unfortunately they decided on the second course; unfortunately the "Speenhamland Act" was speedily adopted all over central and southern England. It was trebly iniquitous: it relieved the rich farmer of his obligation to pay a proper wage; it placed on the struggling small proprietor the obligation to pay increased rates to subsidize his wealthy neighbour; and it robbed the poor labourer of his self-respect. If the early nineteenth century was a golden age for the great landowner and the big tenant farmer, it was a dark age for the ordinary English countryman—an age that grew darker and grimmer as the century advanced.

It is little wonder that the more independent countryman left the country to cross the ocean to America, if he had saved a little money, or made his way to the nearest big town, if he had none. At the end of the eighteenth century

Agricultural Prosperity.

"The Speenhamland Act" 1795.

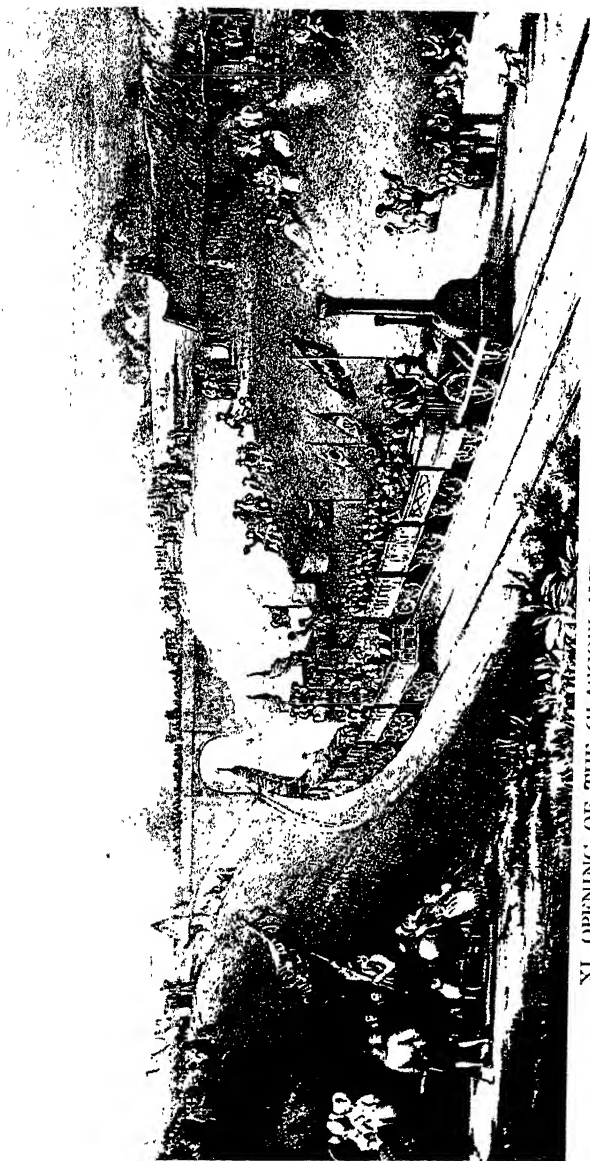
Industry before 1750.

England was still chiefly an agricultural country, a country of villages and little market towns; but the changes that we call the Industrial Revolution had already begun, changes which were to make it chiefly an industrial country, a great workshop supplying other countries with manufactured goods in return for the foodstuffs which it could not produce itself. In the middle of the eighteenth century that had seemed a long way off. The iron trade languished because men had not learned to use coal to work the iron, and the supply of charcoal from the woods of the Sussex Weald and other ancient forests was running short. The linen business was small, centred chiefly in Scotland and the north of Ireland. No true cottons were made, because English spinners could not spin a cotton yarn strong enough for use as warp. The woollen trade was old and fairly vigorous, though production was held up by the fact that it took several spinners to make enough yarn to keep one weaver at work. In every one of these textile trades the methods used had made little progress. The hand wheel and the hand loom had been in use for centuries without any improvement.

Improvements in
Textile
Industry.

The first in the long series of improvements came, not in the lagging process of spinning, but in weaving. This was Kay's invention of the flying shuttle (1733), by which the weaver was spared the need of passing the shuttle from one hand to the other through the warp. By this plan he could work twice as fast and weave double width. Hitherto one man could only weave cloth as wide as the space occupied by his outstretched arms.

This put the spinners farther behind. Soon, however, they made up for lost ground. Hargreaves invented the spinning-jenny, Arkwright the water-frame, and Crompton combined the principles of these two machines in the mule. There was soon an abundance of yarn, and Ark-



XI. OPENING OF THE GLASGOW AND GARNKIRK RAILWAY IN 1831

(See Note on p. xv)

wright's cotton yarn was strong enough for use as a warp. Thus began our gigantic cotton industry. Cheshire and Lancashire were soon busy with cotton mills. Further, though these new machines were first employed in the manufacture of cotton, they could be modified for use with wool and linen. These changes brought other changes in their train. In the old days in many a village there was scarcely a cottage without the spinning-wheel, at which the women of the house earned a steady sum from the sale of their yarn to the merchant who dealt in wool or linen. But the sum was no longer steady; the merchant offered less and less till he ended by offering nothing at all. He found that it paid him to buy his yarn now only from the big spinning mills, equipped with the new machines driven by water power, which were rising on the banks of many a river in northern England and the Scottish Lowlands. Mills like these could turn out enormous quantities of yarn at a fraction of the cost of the old hand-spun material. As for "the spinners and the knitters in the sun", the village was no longer a place for them; if they were wise, they left it to work in the new mill and dwell in the new industrial town.

A little after the middle of the eighteenth century iron-masters learned to use coal instead of charcoal for iron smelting. This sent our iron industry up with a leap. With the more abundant supply of iron more machines could be made, and the metal could be turned to new uses. In 1779, for example, the first iron bridge was built across the Severn at Ironbridge. In 1784 an iron-master named Cort invented the puddling process, by which malleable iron could be made by using coal for heating. He was also the first to use rollers instead of the hammer for squeezing out impurities. These discoveries were to make Britain the great iron-working country of the world. These were the days, too, of Josiah

Wedgwood, the great potter, who made the Staffordshire potteries famous.

Increased production, whether of foodstuffs or of **Transport.** manufactured goods, would have brought little advantage unless it had been accompanied by an improvement in the system of transport. The old, deeply-rutted tracks, fit only for packhorses, were replaced by broad roads, hard and smooth enough to suit the swift new mail-coaches; engineers like the Scotsman, Telford, built great bridges of stone or iron; others, like James Brindley, constructed canals along which bulky goods could be moved much more cheaply than by road. The day of railways and railway engines had not yet dawned.

James
Watt's
Steam-
engine,
1769.

James Watt had patented an improved steam-engine in 1769, but it was designed for pumping water from mines. More important was his success ten years later in designing a steam-engine that could impart a rotary motion. These two inventions had far-reaching results: when manufacturers realized that steam power could be used to drive machines, they began to build their spinning mills in the neighbourhood of the coalfields.

Machines driven by water or steam could be made to spin. Could they be made to weave? The question was answered, not by an engineer, but by a clergyman, Edmund Cartwright, who in 1787 devised a power-loom that would work. But the manufacturers fought shy of it even after it was improved; though some of them set up factories with power-looms, most of them preferred to give out their yarn to weavers, who plied their old-fashioned hand-looms either in their own homes or in small weaving shops. Even in the year of Waterloo the bulk of the cloth produced in Great Britain was woven by hand-loom weavers; not till the middle of the nineteenth century did the change over from hand-loom to power-loom become general.

Change produced change. Already all over England the drift from the country to the town had set in. The appearance of the steam-engine speeded it up and altered its direction. Steam depended upon coal, and most of the big coalfields lay in the midlands and north of England and in central Scotland. The southern manufacturer therefore, who had to pay for the transport of his coal by sea or road or canal from a coalfield hundreds of miles distant, found that he could not produce goods as cheaply as his northern rival, whose mill was only a mile or two away from the pithead. So industry moved northward, into what had hitherto been the poorer and more sparsely populated part of England, and the drift of the population became a northward drift, from the villages and sleepy little market towns of the south. In Scotland the movement took a different turn—it was a drift from the Highlands and the Border hills to the central plain, the region round Edinburgh and Glasgow. In both countries the movement was augmented, after the beginning of the nineteenth century, by immigration from Ireland.

Coal.

The
Drift of
Industry.

The newcomers got work, but they got it under bad conditions. In the old days, though they had a great deal of work to do, they could begin when they pleased, and leave off when they pleased. But in the mill all worked alike. No hours were too long for the giant Steam, and many masters overworked their people to keep up with their machines. This was very hard on the numerous children employed. They often began at five in the morning, and worked till seven, eight, or even nine at night. There were no regular hours for meals; food was eaten in the mill, often covered with dust; the rooms were low and ill-ventilated. Children were sometimes cruelly punished by the overseers—nay, even by their own parents—if they failed to fulfil their tasks. Machinery was unfenced, and accidents were hideously common when the children

Child
Labour.

toiled so early and so late that they dropped to sleep over their work. And terrible as the mills were, they were not half so terrible as the mines, where men, women and children, sunk to the level of beasts of burden, toiled and died in the darkness.

Bad Housing and bad Health. Nor was the plight of the workers much better in their brief hours of rest. Their scanty wages would not allow them to pay the rent of decent houses, had decent houses been available. They had to take what they could get—a room or two either in the ancient slums near the centre of the town, or in the brand new slums that were being rushed up on its outskirts, without water, without light, without sanitation. Infectious diseases were never long absent from these crowded and squalid dwellings; typhus alone slew thousands every year.

Triumph or Disaster? Was the Industrial Revolution, at the stage that it had reached in 1815, to be reckoned a triumph or a disaster? It had made Britain rich, and therefore powerful, able to stand the strain of a fight for its existence as a nation, maintained for twenty-two years. And wealth should not be thought of only as money—the country was producing a greater quantity of manufactured goods and producing them more cheaply, and this meant that more of them could be sold, both at home and abroad. Nor did the poor man always suffer by the change. If in agriculture it was impossible for a farm labourer ever to become a great landowner, in industry a career was open to talent. Many a poor apprentice, endowed with foresight, ambition, and a little luck, became in time the owner of mills and factories employing hundreds of hands, amassed an enormous fortune, and left a monument to his success in the shape of an imposing new country house. Then the armies of industry required not only captains, but non-commissioned officers—engineers to construct, set up, and repair the new ma-

chines, overseers and mill managers to organize and direct those who worked them. The members of this middle class of workers were drawing higher wages and living more comfortably than their fathers had done. But clearly the existence of a great and ever-growing multitude of underpaid, half-starved, over-driven workers proved both that the new-won wealth of the country was badly distributed, and that it had been bought at too high a price.

CHAPTER 33

THE PRELUDE TO REFORM

After reading the last chapter, some of you may think that the early nineteenth-century mill owners were inhuman monsters. Most of them were really decent, respectable men, kind to their own children, admired by their friends as public benefactors finding work for multitudes of poor people, who otherwise would have remained idle and starved. If we had asked one of these employers why he didn't introduce higher wages and a shorter working day, he would have answered that if he did so the other mill owners would be able to undersell him, and force him to close down his mill. If, on the other hand, we asked the workers why they did not join a trade union, which might force him by the threat of a strike to increase their wages and shorten their hours of work, they would have told us that by the Combination Act of 1800 Parliament had made trade unions illegal. If we had asked a member of Parliament why no act had been passed to enforce fair wages and a reasonable working day, he would have explained to us that Parliament did

Parliament and the Working Classes.

not concern itself with such matters, that it was for the individual employer, not for Parliament, to decide what the rates of pay and hours of work should be. If, finally, we had asked why none of the working-class members in the House of Commons had protested, we should have been told that it was absolutely impossible for a working man, or even for a business or professional man of moderate means, to become a member of Parliament. Not only was a member granted no salary, but he was expected to have a private income of £300 a year, derived from landed property. This meant that nearly all the members of the House of Commons were country gentlemen, substantial landowners, and that even the wealthiest of the new captains of industry could not gain admittance, unless he took the precaution of buying an estate and becoming a country gentleman, too. Then it must be remembered that any bill that was passed by the House of Commons might be rejected by the House of Lords, which, except for the two Archbishops and twenty-four Bishops, was composed solely of hereditary peers, who were hereditary landowners as well.

King,
Parliament, and
People.

The Glorious Revolution of 1688, which turned James II from the throne, though it settled for ever the question whether King or Parliament should be master, did not finally establish popular government in England. It is true that henceforward no king could hope to resist Parliament for long; it is not true that popular government, which has been defined as "government of the people, by the people, for the people", was established by the triumph of Parliament. What was established was rather an oligarchy, the rule of a small group of noble families, enriched by the possession of great estates. Even then, many years had to elapse before it could be said that Parliament alone ruled, that, as at the present day, the affairs of the country were directed and decisions

on home and foreign policy taken by the Cabinet, a committee of about a score of members, chosen by the Prime Minister, the leader of the party which has a majority in the Commons, from the ablest or most influential of his followers. The members of the Cabinet are still called the King's ministers, or servants, though they are no longer actually chosen by the king, and each of them is responsible to Parliament for the working of one of the great departments of state. If the Prime Minister loses the confidence of Parliament, he resigns, and his Cabinet with him, whereupon the king asks the leader of the party that was in opposition to him to be the new Prime Minister. William III, however, was his own Prime Minister and his own Foreign Secretary; he presided over the Cabinet in person, and tried to direct its policy. He took care, however, to select his ministers from the Whig party, which at that time had a majority in the Commons. Queen Anne, too, presided at meetings of the Cabinet. She was at first under the influence of the imperious Duchess of Marlborough. The Duchess and her husband wanted the War of the Spanish Succession to go on, and so did the Whig party. The Duchess therefore persuaded Anne to favour Whig ministers. At length Anne grew tired of the Duchess and took a new favourite, Mrs. Masham. Mrs. Masham was a Tory, and the Tories wanted to bring the war to an end. So Anne's ministers were replaced by Tories, and Marlborough was dismissed.

The triumph of the Tories was only temporary. Their leaders, suspected of intriguing with France for a Stewart restoration both before and after the accession of George I in 1714, forfeited the confidence of King and Parliament. Accordingly King George chose his ministers exclusively from the Whigs, who stayed in power for about fifty years. One ministry followed another, Stan-

The
Cabinet.

The Party
System.

The Whig
Ascend-
ancy.

hope, Walpole, Carteret, Pelham, Newcastle—but all were Whig. It is true that neither George I nor George II was responsible for this Whig monopoly of office. The great Whig families in England were at that time able by bribery and influence to keep Parliament full of Whigs. Being in office the Whigs could, and did, use their power and patronage to keep themselves in office by favouring their supporters and making friends of those who were wavering.

The Prime Minister. The accession of the German-speaking George I brought about a more important change. His complete ignorance of English, an ignorance that was shared by his successor, kept him from presiding at, or even attending, the meetings of the Cabinet. The king's place was taken by one of his ministers, usually the First Lord of the Treasury, who presided over the meetings of the Cabinet, led and directed its discussions, and reported its decisions to the king. Though the Prime Minister had to kneel as he delivered his report, it was he, and not the king, who now shaped the policy of the country. But he could do this only as long as Parliament allowed him. Even the great Sir Robert Walpole, who was Prime Minister for the record period of twenty-one years, resigned when he saw that his opponents in the House of Commons could register one more vote than his supporters.

George III attempts to restore Royal Control. George III, however, who knew English and "gloried in the name of Briton", thought that the king's power was still strong enough to break down the power of the great Whig families. His mother was never tired of saying to him in his boyhood, "George, be a King". He had learned to think of the Whigs as the great foes of the royal power, so he favoured the Tories from the first. Early in his reign he tried a Tory Prime Minister, Lord Bute, but as the Commons and the Lords both contained a majority of Whigs, Bute's position soon became im-

possible. By degrees, however, the Tories, with the king's support, grew stronger: first he was able to put in power those Whigs whom he liked; finally, in 1783, he overthrew the great Whig coalition which was headed by Fox, and chose as Prime Minister a young man of twenty-four, William Pitt, son of the Great Commoner. Henceforth for fifty years there were practically nothing but Tory ministries. Pitt himself was Prime Minister for nineteen years (1783-1801 and 1804-6); Lord Liverpool for fifteen years. In fact, political power, which in the first part of the eighteenth century had seemed to belong entirely to the Whigs, appeared in the latter part to be the monopoly of the Tories.

The change-over began with the king's discovery of means to get a party of men in the Commons to support as ministers whomsoever he wished. Pensions and honours he bestowed liberally on members and their friends; his influence secured promotion in the army and navy for the supporters of his policy; even a friendly word would win him the votes of those who liked to be thought intimate at court. In the Lords things were even more simple, for the king could make whom he pleased a peer. Thus the House of Lords, Whig under the first two Georges, became strongly Tory under the third George, and remained Tory.

The growth of the royal power by which Parliament was moulded to the king's wishes was plainly seen, and the Whig party did its best to check it. In 1780 the Commons voted "that the influence of the crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished". It did diminish rapidly after the royal triumph in 1783. The Tories remained in office for almost fifty years, not because George III and his successor George IV (1820-30) kept them there, but, in the first place, because the electors looked on William Pitt as the only pilot who could weather

The Tory
Ascend-
ancy.

the storm of war; in the second place, because even after the peace they suspected the Whigs of being too sympathetic to the political ideas of the French Revolution; and, in the third place, because the electoral system made it very easy for a political party to keep its majority in the Commons once that majority had been obtained, even though the bulk of the people heartily disliked its policy.

Parliament Unrepresentative. In 1815 Parliament did not really represent the nation. In the counties a man had to own land of an annual value of forty shillings before he was allowed to vote. In only thirteen of the English boroughs, each of which was entitled to return two members, was every householder allowed to vote; in all the Scottish and many of the English boroughs only the members of the self-appointed borough council could take part in the election. To make matters worse, the size of the constituencies varied in the most extraordinary manner. Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, and many other big new industrial towns had no member; decayed market towns in the south, where there was only a handful of voters, returned two. Gatton, with six houses and one elector, sent its two members to Parliament. So did Old Sarum, which had neither houses nor inhabitants. The tiny boroughs of Cornwall returned forty-four members; London, Westminster and Middlesex together only eight.

Bribery and Corruption. The system would have been bad enough if everybody had played fair, but nobody did. Electors expected to be bribed; candidates knew that they must outbid their opponents if they wanted to be elected. When Sheridan was returned for Stafford, an item in his election expenses ran, "Paid 250 burgesses £3 each". So in the larger constituencies only a very wealthy man could hope to bribe a sufficient number of electors. The Westminster election of 1788, for example, cost the successful candi-

date £50,000. In very small boroughs, on the other hand, enclosed in some great estate, it was easy for the landowner to browbeat the handful of electors into giving their votes for the candidates he had chosen for them. He often chose either himself, or some member of his party who had paid him a large sum of money. These little manageable, saleable boroughs were known as pocket boroughs. And they could be managed all the more easily because our present method of secret voting—voting by ballot—was unknown.

This state of things plainly called for reform. We may wonder that reform did not come sooner, but during the long war against Napoleon men were too much interested in that life-and-death struggle to care much about altering things at home. And what had been done in France made the Tory party nervous. They spoke of all the reformers in Britain—both the moderates on the right wing of the Whig party, and the Radicals, the advocates of root-and-branch reform, on its left—as if they were dangerous persons who wanted to do what the French political reformers had done in 1789: start a revolution which would sweep away the monarchy and turn Britain into a republic. Thus the wild things that had been done in the name of liberty and equality in France before the end of the eighteenth century—the execution of the King and Queen, the massacres and judicial murders of nobles, the destruction or confiscation of property—had the result of putting off Parliamentary reform in Great Britain till almost a third of the nineteenth century was past.

Parliamentary
Reform
delayed.

We can hardly expect a Parliament chosen, almost exclusively, like the pre-1832 Parliament, from the ranks of the wealthy landowners, to understand or sympathize with the great mass of the British people; but we must not run away with the idea that it consisted solely of

Reforms
by Unre-
formed
Parlia-
ment,
1820-30.

Sir Robert
Peel.

stupid and selfish men of property, obstinately opposed to any change, however reasonable, because it might injure their own interests. After the death of the mad old King George III in 1820, a group of energetic and enlightened Tory statesmen showed that excellent work could be done with what the Whigs had regarded as an outworn legislative machine. Huskisson, the President of the Board of Trade, got Parliament to modify the Navigation Acts so that foreign ships were free to bring goods from countries other than their own into British harbours, and to cut down, or abolish altogether, the duties on wool, silk, timber, and many other kinds of imported goods. Sir Robert Peel, the Home Secretary, secured the repeal of the Combination Acts in 1825, and so cleared the ground for the building up of the trade unions. He also got Parliament to modify the savage criminal code, by abolishing the death penalty for no fewer than a hundred different offences, and to make crime more difficult by establishing in London in 1829 an efficient, well-disciplined police force—the “Bobbies” or “Peelers”—which soon became a model for similar bodies all over the country. The Bill for the repeal of the obsolete Corporation and Test Acts, which, if they had been strictly enforced, would have barred anyone who was not a member of the Church of England from holding any public office, was introduced by the Whig leader, Lord John Russell, in 1828; and the support of Peel and the Duke of Wellington, who was now Prime Minister, ensured its success. A year later Peel and Wellington persuaded the reluctant king to give his assent to the Catholic Emancipation Bill, which swept away all the disabilities that had been imposed upon Catholics since the time of Elizabeth and James I, and gave them absolute equality with Protestants.¹

¹ The sovereign, however, must be a member of the Church of England.

In June, 1830, George IV died. He was succeeded by his sailor brother, William IV. In those days the death of the sovereign made a dissolution of Parliament necessary. In July, however, before it could be dissolved, a second French Revolution broke out. This time there was no massacres, no pillaging and burning of châteaux, no confiscations of property. One fat elderly monarch, Charles X, slipped out of the Tuileries, and another fat elderly monarch, his distant cousin, Louis Philippe, walked in. This orderly July Revolution in France robbed the opponents of reform of their strongest argument. The House of Commons which assembled in the autumn of 1830 contained as many Whigs as Tories.

The July Revolution, 1830.

CHAPTER 34

THE EPOCH OF REFORM

The Duke of Wellington resigned immediately after the General Election of 1830, since his party was no longer in the majority in the House of Commons, and a Whig peer, Earl Grey, became Prime Minister. The Whigs knew that their majority in the House of Commons, though it was a dangerously small one, had been secured because the people expected them to overhaul and amend the system of representation—or rather, misrepresentation—in Parliament. In 1831 Lord John Russell, the Whig leader in the Commons,¹ proposed to take away altogether from the smallest boroughs the right of returning members, to reduce from two to one

The Reform Bill, 1831.

¹ Sons of peers, like Lord John Russell, a younger son of the Duke of Bedford, and some Irish peers, like Lord Palmerston, were eligible for election to the House of Commons.

the number returned by boroughs of moderate size, and to give the surplus seats to the more densely populated counties and the larger towns. At the same time he proposed a uniform franchise. Then began a desperate struggle; the Bill passed the second reading by only one vote; it was thrown out on the third reading, and Parliament dissolved. The country, however, was bent on reform, and the Whigs came back again with a huge majority of over a hundred. The Reform Bill passed the Commons in spite of all the Tories could do to delay it.

The fate of the Bill now hung on the Lords, and the Lords rejected it. This nearly caused a rebellion. There were riots in many towns. The Duke of Newcastle had made himself prominent by his opposition to the Bill; Nottingham Castle, which belonged to him, was burned to the ground. At Bristol a furious mob burned down the Mansion House, the Bishop's Palace, and the Custom House, and held the town at its mercy for three days. Men collected arms, and spoke of marching upon London. In the capital itself shops were closed, church bells tolled, and a run was made upon the Bank of England. When the king appeared in public he was hooted. At length he agreed to make a sufficient number of Whig peers to get a majority in the Lords. The mere threat, however, was enough; when the Bill, slightly altered, was again presented in the House of Lords, Wellington walked out at the head of the Tory peers, and so allowed it to become law.

Reform
Bill be-
comes
Law, 1832.

Provisions
of Reform
Bill.

Besides effecting a redistribution of seats by taking members from the smaller boroughs and giving them to the larger towns and counties, the Reform Act of 1832 established a uniform franchise. The vote was given in the towns to the occupiers of property of £10 yearly value, whether they were owners or only tenants. As very few working men could pay a rent of £10—the equivalent

of a £40 rent to-day—they were left without votes. In fact, in those boroughs where every householder had been an elector, many of them lost the votes that they already possessed. In the counties the payment of a £10 rent did not suffice: the elector had to be the actual owner of the property worth £10 a year, or hold it on a sixty years' lease, or, if he were a tenant, pay a rent of at least £50. Thus not only the farm labourer, but the village tradesman or shopkeeper and the small tenant farmer were excluded from the franchise.

The fuss made about the Reform Bill seems absurd to-day. It effected only a moderate increase in the number of the electors—from about 400,000 to about 600,000—and those who were admitted belonged mainly to the contented and comfortably-off middle class. The retention of the property qualification meant that the members of the House of Commons were still drawn mainly from the ranks of the country gentlemen, with a slightly larger admixture of wealthy manufacturers and business men. But it was the first step, as the Tory statesmen saw, to universal adult suffrage. They did not see that nearly a century would elapse before the final step was taken. The Whig statesmen insisted that there was no excuse for alarm, that they did not mean to move another step. The unenfranchised working classes, disappointed in a measure that promised them so much and granted them so little, argued that all the steps should be taken at once.

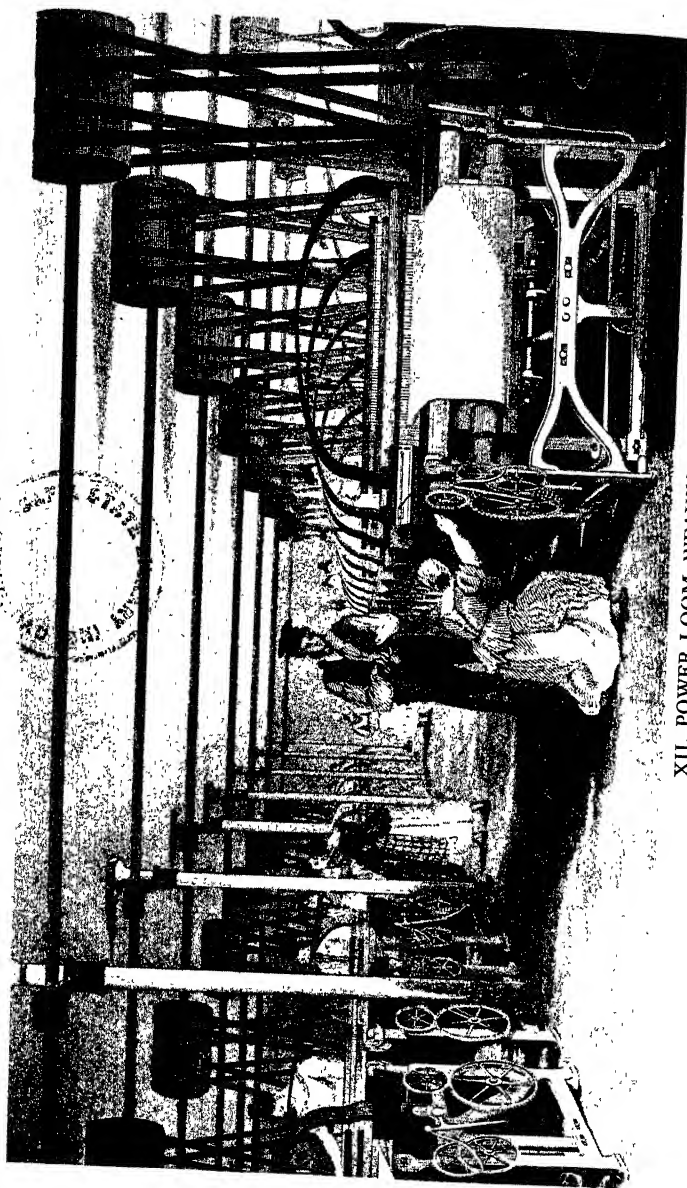
Signifi-
cance of
the Re-
form Bill.

In 1838 an association of working men in London drew up the "People's Charter". It contained six points—demands for annual parliaments, adult male suffrage, equal electoral districts, the abolition of the property qualification, secret voting by ballot, and the payment of members of Parliament. Other working men's associations swelled the number of the "Chartists". A Conven-

The
People's
Charter.

tion or imitation parliament was formed, and in 1839 a petition demanding the immediate grant of the Charter was presented to Parliament. Parliament rejected the Charter, but it could not silence the Chartists; their leader, Feargus O'Connor, spoke brave words about armed rebellion, and in 1848 arranged that a great procession should march to Westminster and present a second petition. It seemed as if the hot-headed O'Connor would plunge the whole country into civil war. But the old Duke of Wellington, to whom, as usual, the government turned in its hour of need, had made his arrangements too. Troops were brought into London and thousands of special constables enrolled. They were not needed; the Chartists who turned up at the rendezvous on Kensington Common went quietly home when they learned that their march would be opposed, and left the monster petition to be carried to the Houses of Parliament in three cabs. With its rejection the Convention broke up, and the Chartist movement came to an inglorious end.

We may condemn Parliament for turning down, almost without discussion, proposals which with one exception—the demand for annual parliaments—have long since been adopted. But Whig and Tory statesmen alike argued, with reason, that it would be folly to allow Parliament to be controlled by a vast multitude of electors, the majority of whom had either very little education, or no education at all. “Government by the People” will work only if it is government by sensible, well-informed people. They saw no objection, however, to making the municipal franchise the same as the Parliamentary franchise. Corrupt and inefficient borough councils, the members of which simply re-elected themselves every year, mismanaged the affairs of almost every town in England and Scotland. In 1835 the English Borough



XII. POWER-LOOM WEAVING

(See Note on p. xvi)

Reform Act, modelled on a Scottish act which had become law two years earlier, established the rule that one-third of the members of the borough council should retire every year, and that their successors should be chosen by householders occupying property worth £10 a year.

The chief reason for the collapse of the Chartist movement was a waning of enthusiasm among the working people themselves. They still believed in root-and-branch parliamentary reform, but they were content to wait now, for many of their worst grievances had been put right by Parliament, and others had righted themselves. They discovered, too, that there were many Tories, like Sir Robert Peel and Lord Ashley, afterwards Earl of Shaftesbury, who were not opposed to all change, but only to change for which they could not see the necessity, and who liked to be called by the new party name, "Conservatives"—conservers of what was old and good; opponents only of what was new and bad. Similarly, the Whigs and their Radical allies took the new name "Liberal", though sometimes they were less liberal than their Conservative opponents, for the self-made men who sat in larger numbers on the Liberal side of the House, the men who had started with nothing and built up big businesses employing hundreds of hands, thought that they would be ruined if they increased wages or shortened hours of work.

Parliament and Social Reform.

Parliament left wages alone, but by the Factory Act of 1833 it forbade the employment in a factory of any child under nine years of age, declared that no child under thirteen should work for more than eight hours a day, and no boy or girl under eighteen for more than twelve hours a day. In 1842, by the Mines Act, it forbade the employment underground of women and girls, or of boys under ten, and, as it had done in the 1833 Act, appointed inspectors to see that the law was not broken.

Factory Acts, 1833-47.

But these Acts placed no limit on the hours that grown-up men and women could be compelled to work. The Factory Act of 1847, however, which limited the hours of work for women of all ages to sixty a week, compelled employers to submit to a ten-hour day for men as well.

The New
Poor Law,
1834.

One reform, however, was regarded by many kind-hearted people, including the author of *Oliver Twist*, as no reform at all. We have seen how, by the "Speenhamland Act", the labourer who worked for an insufficient wage, or who was out of a job, was supported by a grant from the rates. This system undoubtedly encouraged some lazy and shiftless people not to work at all. In 1834 Parliament, alarmed at the enormous increase in the sums of money spent on poor relief, passed a new Poor Law. Outdoor relief was severely restricted: not only the able-bodied man, but almost anyone, lazy or industrious, well or ill, young or old, who could not support himself, was shut up in a workhouse, where he lived on meagre and monotonous rations. Husbands were separated from wives, parents from children, and compelled to live in separate wards, often with imbeciles and criminals. It was too sharp a medicine, with no unemployment insurance or old age pension to rob it of its bitterness; but it made the ordinary decent Englishman work himself to the bone to keep himself, and those whom he loved, outside the walls of these dreadful new "Bastilles". There must have been times when he thought that Parliament worried more about the negro labourer on the sugar plantations in the West Indies than about the over-driven English labourer at home, for in 1833 Parliament not only abolished slavery throughout the Empire, but also made a free gift of £20,000,000 to the former owners of the slaves.

By 1848 the ordinary, decent Englishman was no longer confronted with the choice between the work-

house and work at starvation wages outside. The "Hungry Forties" were almost over. Though the population had almost doubled in fifty years—it was to reach 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ millions in England in 1851 and 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ millions in Scotland—there seemed to be work enough and food enough for everybody. Wages were rising and prices were coming down; new factories, new iron-works were being built, new mines opened up in the midlands and north, and in central Scotland. As recently as 1825 the Stockton and Darlington Railway had been opened, and in 1830 Stephenson's "Rocket" had puffed and creaked along the newly-constructed railway line between Liverpool and Manchester. Yet already the whole island was covered with a network of railways, completed in 1850 by the construction of the Royal Border Bridge across the Tweed at Berwick. The shipyards of the Clyde and Tyne were building more and bigger ships—wooden three-masters twice as large as the merchant ships of 1815, wooden paddle-steamers which, unlike the *Comet* which Bell built in 1812, did not keep to coastal waters, but regularly made the passage across the Atlantic in a little over a fortnight.

Advance
in Indus-
try.

Britain, in fact, was already both the workshop of the world and the market-place of the world. From every corner of the earth ships came, bearing cargoes of raw materials; back to every corner of the earth they returned, bearing cargoes of manufactured goods. This foreign trade was no longer hindered by customs duties and tariffs, for Peel, who became Prime Minister in 1841, continued Huskisson's trade policy; he came very near to complete Free Trade by abolishing all duties on exports and abolishing, or reducing to a trifling figure, the duties on imports. One duty, however, he had solemnly promised his followers to retain: that was the duty on imported corn. It had already been substantially reduced by the

Move
towards
Free
Trade.

**The Corn
Laws.**

introduction in 1828 of a sliding scale, which was further modified by Peel in 1842, so that it varied from a shilling to twenty shillings a quarter, according to the price of home-grown wheat. But when the proposal was made that the Corn Laws should be abolished altogether, and corn imported into the country free of duty, all who held land cried out in indignation that if this were done they would be ruined. It was easy to show that the Corn Laws made bread dearer than it need have been, easy to declare that in times of scarcity artisans were starving because the law forbade cheap corn to be brought from abroad, and that the duties on corn taxed the food of the poor, and filled the pockets of the rich.

The man who persuaded the nation of this was Richard Cobden, the leader of the Anti-Corn Law League, which had been founded in 1838. He went up and down the country speaking and arguing. He found a powerful ally in the Quaker, John Bright, the most eloquent orator in an age of eloquent orators.

Most of the Whigs favoured repeal, but they were in a minority in the Commons. Suddenly, in the late autumn of 1845, a bad harvest in England was followed by the complete failure of the potato crop in Ireland. If the eight and a half million inhabitants of Ireland, who at the best of times lived on the brink of starvation, were not to starve altogether, it would be necessary to admit foreign corn free of duty. "Famine," said John Bright, "against which we had warred, joined us." Peel saw that the ports must be opened to let in corn from abroad; and he saw further that it would be almost impossible to close them again. His followers would not listen to him. They decided against free corn, and Peel resigned. However, Lord John Russell could not form a Whig ministry, and Peel had to come back. The sight was a strange one—a Tory minister, supported by the Whigs and a few of his

own friends, and opposed by the party that had placed him in power, proposed the very measure he had been relied on to reject. Yet, amid the most bitter attacks, the most galling charges of desertion and treachery, Peel held on his way, and the Corn Laws were repealed.

Repeal of
the Corn
Laws, 1846.

His opponents on his own side soon had their revenge; an hour or two after the Bill for repeal had passed its third reading in the Commons, they united with the Opposition to outvote him on another measure, and so forced him to resign. He never held office again; two years later he was killed by a fall from his horse. The "Peelites", that section of his party that had stuck to him through thick and thin, joined the Liberals. Among them was W. E. Gladstone.

The repeal of the Navigation Acts by the Liberals in 1849 marked the last stage in the freeing of trade with other countries. The gloomy prophecies of the Protectionists were not fulfilled, and the farmers still got prices for their crops high enough to make them bring every available acre of land under the plough. Matthew Arnold, visiting the neighbourhood of Oxford twenty years after the repeal of the Corn Laws, lamented that

Britain
adopts
Free
Trade.

"Many a dingle on the loved hill-side
With thorns once studded, old, white-blossom'd trees, . . .
Hath since our day put by
The coronals of that forgotten time;
Down each green bank hath gone the ploughboy's team."

But soon the factory and the workshop would become far more important than the farm; already in 1851 half the people of Britain were town-dwellers; already the biggest fortunes were made, not from agriculture, but from commerce and industry; already new materials and new methods were being employed, which meant that more and more goods could be turned out faster and

faster, and sent to new markets farther and farther away.

To most Englishmen the war with Napoleon was now not even a memory; it had become something to be read about in books. After the Great Exhibition in 1851, to which masses of foreigners came to see British goods and to exhibit their own, many of them began to think that international trade would bind the peoples of the world more closely together, and to look on war as unnecessary and absurd. Three years later, Britain was at war.

CHAPTER 35

CRIMEAN WAR. INDIAN MUTINY

If we compare a map of Europe as it was in 1851 with a map of Europe as it was between 1919 and 1939, we at once notice certain big differences. For one thing, there is no Germany on the 1851 map—only a group of thirty-nine states, big and little, labelled Germanic Confederation. For another, Turkey, instead of being confined to the district round Constantinople, extended in 1851 right up to the River Save, and away beyond the River Danube to the Carpathian Mountains, so that it included the whole of modern Roumania and Bulgaria, most of Yugoslavia, outside the two small principalities of Serbia and Montenegro, and all but the southern part of modern Greece. In Asia the Sultan of Turkey included in his dominions not only present-day Turkey, which is little more than the peninsula of Asia Minor, but Syria, Palestine, Arabia, and Mesopotamia, up to the borders of Persia. The Turks themselves were Asiatics and Mohammedans. The majority of the inhabitants of Turkey in Europe were the descendants of conquered eastern European peoples, belonging to the Greek Ortho-



THE BOMBAY TAVERN

after Rowlandson

dox Church, like the Russians, whom many of them regarded as their kinsfolk. In Palestine, however, there was a sprinkling of Roman Catholics—Latin Christians, as they were sometimes called to distinguish them from the Greek Christians, the members, whether they were Greeks or not, of the Greek Orthodox Church. It seemed natural and right that the Tsar of Russia should be looked on as the protector of the Greek Christians within the Turkish Empire, just as the Catholic Kings of France had been looked on as the protectors of the Latin Christians.

In 1848 another revolution broke out in France. It resulted in the establishment of a short-lived republic, under the presidency of Louis Napoleon, a nephew of the great Emperor. In 1852 the Prince-President followed his uncle's example, and was proclaimed Emperor, with the title of Napoleon III. To gain the favour of his Catholic subjects he revived the claim of the old French kings to be the protectors of the Latin Christians in Turkey. This involved him in a bitter dispute with the Tsar over the custody of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and other holy places in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

Russia and
France at
Variance.

Where did Britain come in? There was no need for Britain to come in at all, but the British government suspected that the Tsar was playing a double game; that his measures to protect the Greek Christians were really measures to bring Constantinople and the whole of Turkey in Europe under Russian control, and to give the Russian fleet the command of the Mediterranean. The Balance of Power would then be upset: Russia would be so powerful that, like France under Louis XIV or Napoleon, she could impose her will on the rest of Europe.

Britain
interested
in Dispute.

The fears of the British Government may have been groundless; the fact remains that it encouraged the

Turks to resist the Russian demands, and when Russia attacked Turkey, Britain joined with France in 1854 to aid the Turks. The Crimean War, 1854-6.

To cripple the power of Russia in the Black Sea the allies resolved to attack the fortress of Sebastopol. A British and a French army were landed and won the battle of the Alma; had they pushed on at once, they might have taken Sebastopol with a rush. The allied generals, however, were over-cautious. They marched round to the southern side of the city, and began a regular siege.

The Russians soon showed that they did not mean to leave the allies to conduct the siege quietly. First they made an attack on Balaclava, the port where all the British stores lay. Though Tennyson has immortalized the Charge of the Light Brigade, Balaclava was saved, not by that act of heroic folly, but by the charge of another small body of cavalry, the Heavy Brigade, and by the stubborn resistance of a single regiment of Highlanders, the famous "Thin Red Line". Balaclava, 1854.

If Balaclava should be remembered to the honour of our cavalry, Inkerman was as glorious for our infantry. In the grey dawn of a November morning the Russians flung 40,000 men on the British lines. Our troops were surprised. The Russians were five to one, and seemed sure of victory, but the British soldier fought heroically. Wherever the Russians appeared they were met with the bayonet; a British company would charge a regiment; a regiment break a Russian column. Desperate hand-to-hand fighting at last won the day and hurled the Russians back into Sebastopol. Inkerman, 1854.

All this made people at home proud of our army, but it did little to take Sebastopol. Winter came on, cold and piercing. The troops were badly supplied with food and shelter. In the hospital at Scutari, three hundred miles away on the other side of the Black Sea, the sick

Florence Nightingale. and wounded were dying for want of nursing. Hearing of this, Miss Florence Nightingale volunteered to go out. Other ladies went with her. To her kind and gentle care many a British soldier owed his life. By her efforts the hospital was set in order. She let nothing stand in the way of the good of her wounded men. One night some stores which she wanted urgently were refused on the ground that they could not be given without a signed order. She would not allow the wounded to die on account of absurd rules of this kind. She had the stores opened by force, and took what she wanted.

Capture of Sebastopol, 1855. At last, in the summer of 1855, the British and French lines drew close to Sebastopol, and an attack was launched against it, only to be beaten back. In September, a year after the beginning of the siege, after a furious bombardment had silenced the Russian guns, the British and French infantry advanced to the attack. The British objective was a fortification called the Redan, the French, a fort called the Malakhoff. But sickness had long ago slain the heroes of Balaclava and Inkerman; the British divisions, largely composed as they were of half-trained youngsters, failed to take the Redan, and the honour of ending the siege fell to the French, who stormed the Malakhoff. The Russians at once evacuated the town.

The Peace of Paris, 1856. The fall of Sebastopol meant the end of the war. In 1856 the Peace of Paris was signed. It was meant to head Russia off from the Mediterranean and South-Eastern Europe. But in twenty years all the purposes of the peace were defeated: in 1870 Russian warships were back again in the Black Sea, from which the Peace of Paris had barred them, and in 1877 Russian troops were advancing on Constantinople.

The Crimean War made the people at home wake up to the need for Army reform. It was in the Crimean War that newspaper correspondents first sent home full

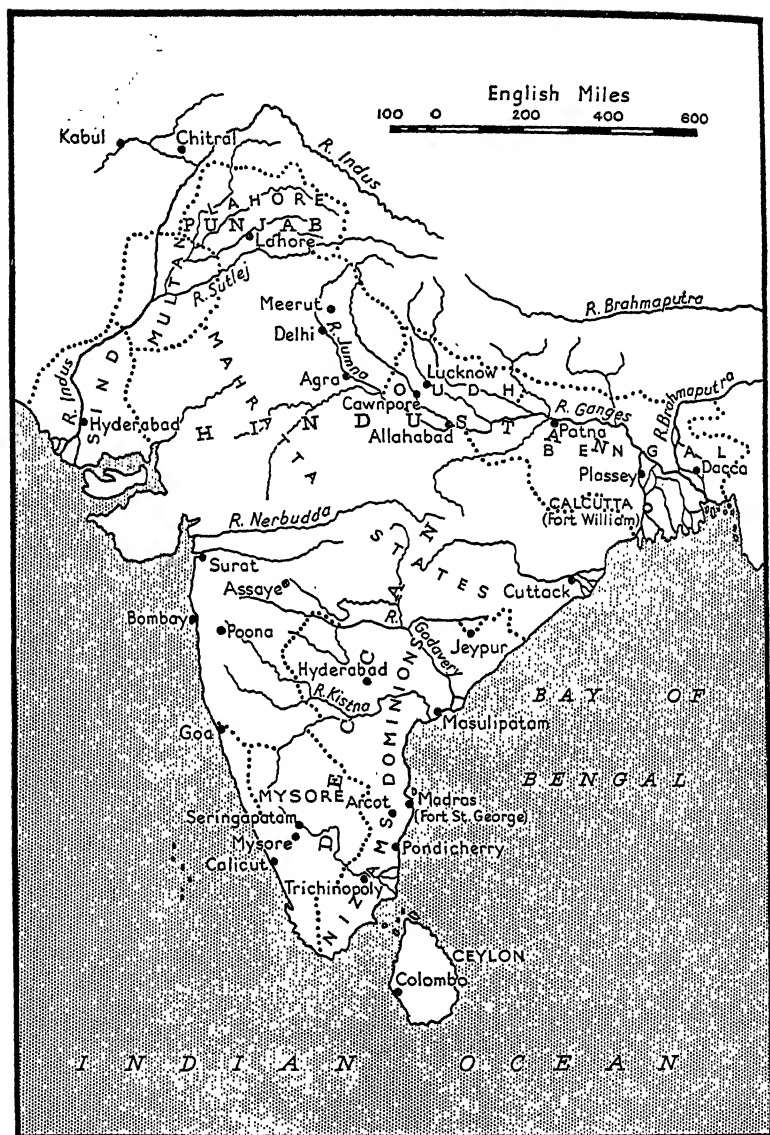
and trustworthy accounts of how the men were faring. Britain learned the truth about war. It was not a pleasant truth. In forty years of peace our senior officers had learned nothing—Lord Raglan, the Peninsular veteran who commanded the British Army, persisted in calling the Russians “the French”—and had forgotten much. Transport, commissariat, hospitals—all were grossly mismanaged. Nor can it be said that the lesson of our failure was taken to heart, though some small improvements were made. The fate of Europe in the second half of the century was decided by armies far different from ours in size, organization, and equipment.

In a year we were again engaged in war, this time in India. The East India Company had long ceased to be merely a trading company, or indeed, to be a trading company at all. In 1784 Parliament placed its political activities under the supervision of a small Board of Control, the President of which had a seat in the Cabinet. It continued, however, to “maintain armies and retail tea”, till, in 1833, Parliament made it abandon trade altogether and give all its attention to governing the lands that it had acquired. Since the days of Warren Hastings the Company had steadily extended its territory and built up an army, a quarter of a million strong, in its defence. Of these troops, however, barely one-fifth were British; the rest were Sepoys—native soldiers—commanded by a few British officers.

One Indian prince after another had seen his dominions taken by the Company; those who remained thought their turn would come next. Thus they were ready to rebel, when an accident made rebellion easy. The Sepoys were given a new rifle, and the cartridges for it had to be greased. The story went about that the grease was made of pigs’ fat and cows’ fat. To a Mohammedan the pig is unclean, and a Hindu holds the cow to be sacred. He

India.

Indian
Discontent.



believed that if he handled these cartridges he would be defiled; he would lose caste—that is to say, his friends would despise him; and he also believed that he would be punished for his offence in the next world. Thus the Sepoys became mutinous. At Meerut they fired on their British officers, and marched off to Delhi. At Lucknow a tiny British garrison under Sir Henry Lawrence was besieged in the Residency. At Cawnpore there were about a thousand British men, women, and children. They took refuge in a hospital surrounded by a low mud wall, not thick enough to stop the bullets. There was no shelter from the scorching Indian sun; the one wall was swept by the mutineers' fire; every man who went to draw water did it at the risk of his life. One by one the defenders fell. Still, the mutineers could not storm the wall. Nana Sahib, who commanded them, determined to do by treachery what he could not do by force. He offered to send the British away by river, but when they were embarked his men shot them down from the banks. A few women and children were saved for a worse fate. They were imprisoned in a house for a few days. Then murderers were sent in to butcher them with swords. It is no wonder that when the British troops again entered Cawnpore they took a bitter vengeance on the mutineers.

The Indian
Mutiny,
1857.

The
Massacre
at Cawn-
pore.

First, however, Delhi had to be taken. It was a desperate task for a mere handful of British troops to capture a great city swarming with mutineers. Yet it was done. John Lawrence, governor of the Punjab, sent every man he could spare to help the scanty force clinging to the Delhi ridge, themselves rather besieged than besieging. He sent, too, an officer, John Nicholson, who saw that Delhi must be taken at all hazards. Nothing could resist Nicholson's fiery courage. Breaches were made in the walls. The Kashmir Gate was blown up. The troops

Delhi
taken.

rushed in. Nicholson headed a storming party, and was mortally wounded in the streets; but he had done his work. Delhi was taken, and the British power in India saved.

Siege of Lucknow. Meantime Lucknow held out bravely against numberless assaults. The walls crumbled under cannon fire; mines were exploded under the feet of the garrison; the commander, Henry Lawrence, brother of the governor of the Punjab, was killed by a shell;

“But ever upon our topmost roof the banner of England blew.”

After three months Havelock reached them with a small relieving force, only to be besieged in his turn. Another two months had to pass before the new commander-in-chief in India, Sir Colin Campbell, led his victorious army into the town.

The Mutiny suppressed. All this time British reinforcements had been pouring into India, but the savage punishment meted out to the rebels, the proclamation by Lord Canning, the Governor-General, confiscating the lands of every proprietor in the province of Oudh who could not prove that he was not guilty of murderously shedding English blood, served only to prolong the conflict. “No mutineer,” said John Lawrence, “ever surrenders; for directly he is caught he is shot or hanged.” Though in the early summer of 1858 Sir Hugh Rose struck swiftly, stormed the last rebel strongholds in central India and scattered the last rebel armies, guerilla bands continued the struggle far into the following year.

East India Company abolished, 1858. It had already been decided by Parliament that the time had come to take India from the hands of the East India Company. At the end of 1858 the people of India learned from a royal proclamation that the Company had been dissolved, and all its former possessions put under the Crown. India was to be ruled by a Viceroy, appointed

by the sovereign. The rights and dignities of the rulers of the native states—states which covered about a third of the area of India—would be respected. Though the Viceroy, his Council, and the Indian Civil Service—the small army of officials who helped him in the work of government—were all to be British, the clause in the charter stating that neither race, creed, nor colour would impose any disability on the natives of India left the door open to their attaining later the highest posts in the government of their country.

India was quiet again. In fact, the greater part of India had remained untroubled by the Mutiny. She began to prosper under an impartial and efficient government. Plague and famine were met by measures which took from them much of their former deadliness. With the Proclamation in 1877 of Queen Victoria as Empress of India it seemed that the memories of massacre and revenge had finally disappeared.

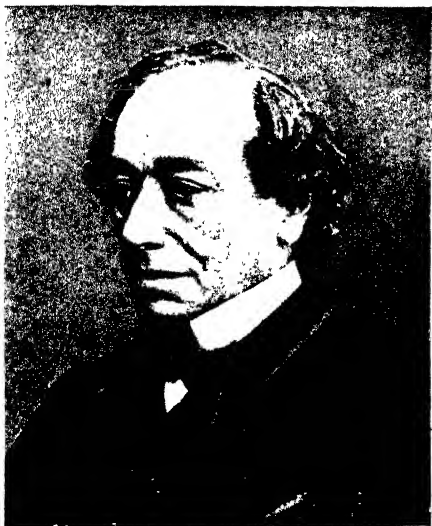
CHAPTER 36

GREAT PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS

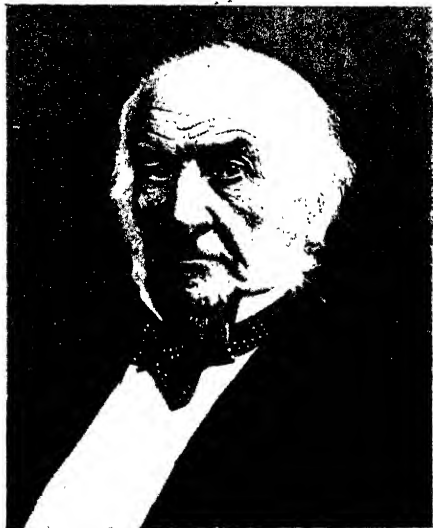
There are four outstanding names connected with our Parliamentary history in the reign of Queen Victoria—those of Peel, Palmerston, Disraeli, and Gladstone. They were all great leaders in the House of Commons, the place from which a statesman can exercise the highest influence. Though Lord Rosebery, who succeeded Mr. Gladstone as Prime Minister in 1894, and his opponent and successor, Lord Salisbury, were both members of the House of Lords, since Lord Salisbury retired in 1902 the Prime Minister has always been a member of the House of Commons. A member of the Upper House may be a

golden-tongued orator like Lord Rosebery, or a far-seeing diplomat like Lord Salisbury, but he cannot be a great parliamentary leader in the sense that both the Pitts and the four prime ministers mentioned above were great, because he cannot sit in the Commons, and sway the House by his speeches into support of his policy. That support is essential to him: an adverse vote in the Lords is now no more than a signal to go cautiously; an adverse vote in the Commons means that he and his Cabinet must resign.

Palmerston. The death of Peel in 1850 left Palmerston, who with one short break was Prime Minister from 1855 to 1865, the man most trusted by the nation. He was a Whig of the old school, opposed to any extension of the franchise beyond the limits established in 1832, and indifferent or hostile to any measure for further social reform. If Palmerston believed in letting sleeping dogs lie at home, he believed in waking them up abroad. "Whenever there was a despot to be insulted," it was said, "he joyfully insulted him." As Foreign Secretary he liked to do as he wished—"to make strokes off his own bat", as he said—and twice he gave great offence to Queen Victoria by doing things without consulting either her or the Prime Minister. On the second occasion, when, without waiting for the consent of either the Queen or the Cabinet, he expressed approval of Louis Napoleon's seizure of power in France, he was forced to resign. Men said, "Palmerston is smashed," but he knew better. When the news of the Crimean War came home, and Britain heard the stories of the stupidity and neglect at headquarters—of coffee sent out unroasted, and consignments of boots all to fit the left foot—there was great anger with Lord Aberdeen's government. Aberdeen resigned, and the only man that the country would accept as Prime Minister was Palmerston. It was a time of



BENJAMIN DISRAELI
(See Note on p. xvi)



WILLIAM EWART
GLADSTONE
(See Note on p. xvi)

XIII. GREAT PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS OF THE
NINETEENTH CENTURY

trouble, and a strong man was wanted. So great was the trust that Englishmen felt in him that even when he went wrong they preferred his rule to that of anyone else. No sooner was the Crimean War ended than he got into a dispute with China because the Chinese had boarded a vessel belonging to a Chinaman but flying the British flag. It had no right to fly it, but the Chinese were doing us no injury. Palmerston, however, said our flag was insulted, and went to war about it. His own party revolted against him, and he was defeated in the Commons. Instead of resigning, he dissolved Parliament and appealed to the country. In the General Election of 1857 he was sent back with a large majority, and several of his critics, including Bright and Cobden, lost their seats.

His countrymen believed in him to the last. They admired the man, who, like Lord Shaftesbury's great ancestor, was "a daring pilot in extremity". They did not see that he, too, would "steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit", that but for the intervention of the dying Prince Consort, he would have plunged his country into a disastrous war with the United States. His protest to the Tsar in 1863 on behalf of the insurgent Poles met with as little success as his protest to the King of Prussia and his "Iron Chancellor" Bismarck against the unprovoked invasion of Denmark by Prussian forces, an action that was to be the first move in the building up of a united and bellicose German Empire.

It was not till Palmerston's death in 1865 that the dividing line between Liberals and Conservatives was clearly drawn.

"Every boy and every gal
That's born into the world alive
Is either a little Liberal,
Or else a little Conservative,"

sang the sentry in the opera *Iolanthe*, and, to judge from the election returns down to the end of the nineteenth century, his theory fitted the facts. Liberal and Conservative governments alternated with monotonous regularity. High above other Liberal leaders towered W. E. Gladstone, born in England of Scottish parents, educated at Eton and Oxford, a typical solid respectable Englishman in his love of order and justice, in his hatred of muddle. He seemed to think that muddles existed to be cleaned up, and he existed that he might clean them up. For, like many other respectable Englishmen, he believed that if he thought a policy was right then it was right, and he ought to carry it out whatever the cost. In impassioned eloquence, in tireless energy—he did not resign finally till he was eighty-four—he excelled not only his own colleagues, but the greatest of his opponents.

To the untiring idealist, Gladstone, was opposed the languid cynic, Disraeli—the once penniless adventurer who had gained a reputation as a man of fashion and a popular novelist. But the enigmatic Disraeli was not quite what he seemed. There was no more jealous guardian of the honour of England than this descendant of Italian Jews. He never lost that sympathy with his less fortunate fellow men that made him protest, in his novel *Sybil*, against the tragic division of England into Two Nations, the Rich and the Poor.

It was Disraeli who persuaded the Conservatives to postpone indefinitely any attempt to revive Protection; it was Disraeli who, in 1867, when the Liberals were crying out for franchise reform, resolved to take the wind out of their sails by a Reform Bill of his own. In the towns all male householders and all lodgers occupying rooms of an annual value of £10 or more received a vote; in the counties householders paying less than £12 a year in rent were still left without a vote. Altogether the

electorate was doubled by the addition of a million new voters. The working men in the boroughs became voters, though the vote was still denied to farm labourers. At the same time, by depriving small two-member constituencies of one of their members, and adding the surplus to towns or counties that were under-represented, it was found possible to carry out a redistribution of seats without adding to the total number of members. It was, as the Conservative Prime Minister, Lord Derby, called it, "a leap in the dark"; in Disraeli's words, "it dished the Whigs". It dished Disraeli himself for the time being. The Conservatives took the credit for the Bill, but the Liberals were returned by a thumping majority at the General Election of 1868.

"Whenever he gets my place," said Palmerston of Gladstone, "we shall have strange doings." "At last I come among you unmuzzled," said Gladstone to his constituents soon after Palmerston's death. In 1868 there were muddles in plenty calling to be cleaned up, and the greatest of them was Ireland. Starvation had slain its thousands in the two famine years; infectious diseases, smiting the half-fed inhabitants, slew their tens of thousands in the year that followed. The flight from Ireland began and has continued ever since. In 1845, the first of the famine years, the population of the country was eight and a half millions; in 1871 it stood at only five millions; in the period between, the flood of emigration sometimes rose to 200,000 in a single year. Most of the emigrants went to the United States; tens of thousands of them crowded into the industrial regions of Scotland and the north of England. But the lesson of the famine was not learned, or if it was learned, could not be applied. The Industrial Revolution had touched only one corner of Ireland. It was still almost entirely an agricultural country, with an agricultural system that had

The Irish
Question.

changed only for the worse since the early eighteenth century, for, with the increase in the population, farms of moderate size had been divided and subdivided and rents had been steadily raised.

The Union of the Irish Parliament to the Parliament of Great Britain in 1800 had done nothing to remedy its economic ills. It had become a country of miserably poor tenant farmers, growing potatoes year in and year out on a few acres of exhausted soil, dreading eviction if they did not pay the stiff rents demanded of them. Things were different, it is true, in the province of Ulster, with its shipyards, its great linen factories, and its neat dairy farms, but the inhabitants of Ulster were for the most part Protestants, descendants of the Scottish and English settlers of the time of James I and Cromwell, separated by religion, by race, and by tradition from the predominantly Catholic and Celtic population of the rest of Ireland. Few Irishmen outside Ulster had any love for England. Some, who brooded over a record of English misdeeds in Ireland better forgotten, hated England, and dreamt of the day when Ireland would be a republic; others would have been content with the repeal of the parliamentary union of 1800, and the establishment of Home Rule. Under this arrangement Ireland would have been governed by a Parliament sitting in Dublin, but would have remained within the Empire.

In 1868, Gladstone thought to appease Irish discontent by disestablishing the Church of Ireland—an outpost in Ireland of the Church of England, which, even in Ulster, had never been the church of more than a small section of the Irish people. Then again, in 1870, he passed the Irish Land Act, the first of a long series of acts which ultimately made Ireland a country of peasant proprietors and of small farmers who were tenants of the State.

Irish
Land Act,
1870.

The Reform Act of 1867, which gave the vote to hundreds of thousands of working men who had little or no schooling, convinced Gladstone that the State must do what the societies organized by the Churches had failed to do—put a school within reach of every child in the country. This was done by the Education Act of 1870, though it was not till six years later that education for pupils under thirteen was made compulsory, and not till 1891 that it was made free. At the same time it was made the rule that admission to the Civil Service should be decided, not by the candidate's political views, or by his possession of influential friends, but by his success in a competitive examination. In 1871 Parliament abolished religious tests in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, admittance to which had hitherto been reserved for members of the Church of England.

The 1870
Education
Act.

Cardwell, the Secretary for War, one of Gladstone's ablest lieutenants, carried out a series of drastic reforms in the army, including the abolition of the Purchase System (whereby officers had been able to buy promotion), the building up of a reserve, and the linking up of regiments in pairs, to ensure that no one unit had too long a spell of duty abroad—reforms which left the army small, but made it an effective instrument for waging little wars.

Army
Reform.

Ireland; Education; the Army—what next? The repeal of the Combination Acts in 1825 had enabled workmen in various trades to form trade unions, and to elect officials who would negotiate with employers in disputes about wages or hours or conditions of work, and, if they thought it necessary, would back up their demands by threatening to call a strike. If the workers did strike, they would be kept going for a time by strike pay drawn from the funds of the union, built up by their regular weekly contributions. The unions also attempted

Trade
Unionism.

to do what is now done by the government—make payments to those of their number who were unemployed through ill-health. But though the unions were no longer illegal, their existence was not yet recognized by the law; consequently, if a dishonest official went off with the funds entrusted to him, the union could not prosecute him and get its money back. The Trade Union Act of 1871 definitely recognized the trade unions as lawful associations, and gave full protection to their funds.

Lastly, in 1872, came the Ballot Act, which made voting in elections secret.

It was a wonderful record, but it did not content many of Gladstone's more radical supporters. There was Joseph Chamberlain, who did not see why the government should not clean up or clear out the slums of the great new industrial cities, as he, when mayor, had cleaned up the slums of his own city of Birmingham. But Gladstone did not see why the state should undertake all sorts of duties which, in his opinion, could be done just as well by private persons.

Disraeli had no such scruples. His return to power in 1874 was followed in 1875 by the passing of a Public Health Act, a Trade Union Act which enormously increased the power of the unions, and numerous other measures designed to improve the condition of the people. But his party was not eager to follow his lead, and was somewhat relieved when it saw him becoming more and more immersed in foreign affairs. For Disraeli believed in the British Empire, and wished to extend it, and make its power felt abroad. In 1875, for example, without waiting to consult Parliament or the Cabinet, he bought for the nation by telegram about £4,000,000 worth of shares in the recently constructed Suez Canal, which the spendthrift Khedive of Egypt wished to sell. The canal is very important to us as a maritime power, and through

the shares, now valued at many times their original cost, we have a powerful voice in its management. He was willing to risk more than the disapproval of the Cabinet: he sent the British fleet to Constantinople in 1878, when the Russian armies were within striking distance of the town. This firmness made Russia pause and agree to join in the Congress of Berlin. Disraeli himself, by this time created Earl of Beaconsfield, went to the Congress, accompanied by the Foreign Secretary, Lord Salisbury, and returned, bringing, as he said, "Peace with honour". He had made Britain play a great and dignified part, and Britain was proud of him.

Congress
of Berlin,
1878.

When, in 1880, Disraeli's ministry fell and Gladstone came in again, he intended to pursue the same policy as before—namely, to make reforms at home, and interfere as little as possible abroad. But he became involved in a war against the Boers of the Transvaal, which ended disastrously, and he was drawn into very active intervention in the affairs of Egypt. We shall see more of these events in the following chapters. It was not till 1884 that he was able to present the country with a substantial reform in the shape of a Franchise Act, which, by giving the vote to householders in the counties, raised the number of electors from three to five millions. At the same time there was a redistribution of seats, which divided Great Britain and Ireland into a multitude of one-member constituencies, approximately equal in size. A year later the office of Secretary for Scotland, which had been abolished after the 'Forty-Five Rebellion, was restored.

What stood in Gladstone's way even more than affairs in Egypt and the Sudan was the determination of the Irish people to get Home Rule. In the Commons the Irish members, led by the bitter-tongued Parnell, reduced the obstruction of the business of the House to a fine art, and held up legislation. In Ireland many tenants refused to

Irish
Home
Rule.

pay their rents. Landlords and bailiffs were threatened and murdered. Some violent and reckless men used dynamite for outrage and intimidation. In 1882 the Secretary for Ireland, Lord Frederick Cavendish, was stabbed in Phoenix Park. In consequence Gladstone was compelled to pass very severe measures to keep order.

At length he became convinced that the policy of severity, of "coercion", was as much a failure as his former policy of appeasement, and that nothing short of a grant of complete Home Rule would satisfy the Irish people. Accordingly, in 1886, he introduced a Home Rule Bill, which was welcomed by Parnell and his followers, and regarded with horror and dismay by the majority of the Conservatives. Many of Gladstone's followers, too, including his ablest lieutenant, Joseph Chamberlain, declared that they could not support his policy.

He put it to the test, and lost it all. Ninety-three Liberals joined the Conservatives in voting against the Bill; it was rejected, and he resigned. Lord Salisbury became Prime Minister. The "Liberal Unionists", who included the heads of most of the great Whig families, definitely abandoned the Liberals for their new Conservative allies.

The strife of political parties was stilled in the following year, when Queen Victoria celebrated her Jubilee.

"Fifty years of ever-broadening commerce!
Fifty years of ever-brightening science!
Fifty years of ever-widening Empire!"

sang Tennyson, the Poet Laureate. There were more and more factories, more and more blast-furnaces and engineering works, more and bigger heaps of slag at the pit-heads, more smoke-blackened industrial towns sprawling into and often obliterating the green countryside, more wharves and shipbuilding yards stretching

Industrial
Prosperity.

farther and farther along the banks of Clyde and Tyne, of Mersey and Thames. And there was change within change: steel had conquered iron, as iron had conquered wood; the wooden sailing-ship was never swifter or more beautiful, but along with the clumsy iron-built paddle-boat it was being driven from the seas by the all-steel steamship with screw propeller.

Among all the changes there was one disastrous change for the worse. English agriculture was steadily declining; every year more land went out of cultivation. A series of wet summers and bad harvests in the 'seventies began the mischief, and the importation of cheap corn from the great new wheat-growing regions in Canada and the United States made it permanent. But few of "the little street-bred people", few statesmen even, worried about the ruin of British agriculture. Britain's destiny was to be a factory, not a farm, they argued. What did it matter where the food came from, as long as the workers in the factory were fed? Three things they forgot: that Britain was an island; that it might some day be threatened by another great maritime power; and that

**Decline of
Agriculture.**

"A bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied".

CHAPTER 37

EVER-WIDENING EMPIRE

Tennyson's mention of "fifty years of ever-widening Empire" in his Jubilee Ode was only one of many signs of a change of attitude on the part of British statesmen and people toward the Colonies. Another was the holding of the first Colonial Conference, which was attended

**Britain
and the
Empire: a
Change of
Policy.**

by the colonial prime ministers who had come to London for the Jubilee, and presided over by Lord Salisbury. When our first American colonies shook off our rule and made themselves independent, the British people took the loss with surprising calm. It was, they said, natural. Some nineteenth-century writers even went so far as to say that sooner or later our other colonies would do the same. Like fruit from a tree, when the colonies were ripe they would drop off.

This view seemed reasonable, but time has proved it to be wrong. The argument, founded on the loss of the United States, was based on the idea that we should continue to treat our other colonies as we had treated them. Instead, we adopted a different treatment, a treatment which has held the Empire together. What is the secret of this better government on the part of Britain?

The answer seems a strange one. The problem of how to rule better has been solved by not ruling at all. Some of the colonies are no longer colonies but "dominions", enjoying complete self-government, the right to manage their own affairs, the right even to secede from the Empire should they so decide. They are no longer British *possessions*; they are members of a Commonwealth of Nations of which Great Britain is the head, bound together, not by submission to the authority of Parliament at Westminster, but by a common allegiance to the Crown. Others, where the white inhabitants form only a small minority, do not as yet have self-government, but there, too, the home government interferes as little as possible with the permanent officials and local assemblies.

By Pitt's Canada Act of 1791 the two provinces of Upper and Lower Canada (divided by the Ottawa River) had been given a sort of constitution. It was, however, the shadow of self-government, not the reality. For

though each colony had an elected Assembly to make laws, yet the real government was in the hands of a council named by the governor sent out from England, and the Assembly had no power over this council. In Britain Parliament can turn out ministers whom it dislikes; in Canada this could not be done. Thus ministers and Assemblies were continually quarrelling.

Besides this there were other causes of complaint. Lower Canada was mainly French, Upper Canada British, and the races were jealous of each other. Then there was a small body of persons, friends of the Government, who got all the offices, and this was felt as a grievance. Thus both the Canadas were discontented. When in 1837 the *Te Deum* was sung for the accession of our Queen, many Canadians walked out of the churches. In the same year a rebellion began both in Lower and Upper Canada. This rebellion failed, but it had one good effect, for it called the attention of the British Government to the feelings of the Canadians. Britain had reformed her own Parliaments, and the time had come for her to reform her colonial system also. "Radical Jack", the impetuous Lord Durham, was sent to Canada. In some ways he acted rashly, and he was soon recalled, but he issued a report which opened men's eyes at home. The immediate outcome of it was the Act of 1840, which united the two Canadas, but did not carry out his most sensible proposals. In 1847, however, his son-in-law, the Governor-General, Lord Elgin, decided to accept as ministers only those who belonged to the party that had a majority in the Assembly, and in this way established responsible government after the English model.

Upper and Lower Canada formed only a small part of that great expanse of territory which to-day we call the Dominion of Canada. On the eastern seaboard were grouped the four older British colonies: Newfoundland,

Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick. More than a thousand miles to the west of Upper Canada, beyond the Rocky Mountains, lay the new colony of British Columbia. Between them stretched the half-explored lands of the Hudson's Bay Company. If these isolated and thinly populated colonies were ever to attract immigrants from Great Britain, who so far seemed to prefer to settle in the United States, they would have to be linked up by a great trans-continental railway. But before that could happen the political isolation of the different colonies would have to be broken down.

**Dominion
of Canada.** By the British North America Act of 1867, Upper and Lower Canada, now the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, joined with the provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to form the Dominion of Canada. The leading men of Canada asked that this Act should be passed, because they saw that Union would solve many of their country's problems. The provinces were not completely united; they were "federated"; they kept their provincial assemblies to look after their local affairs, but they each sent representatives to the Dominion Parliament at Ottawa. This Parliament, which consists of an upper house, the Senate, and a lower house, the Commons, deals with all general matters, government debts, loans and taxation, banking and coinage, the law, public service, and railways. The Hudson's Bay Company surrendered its territories to the Dominion in 1869; in 1871, on condition that a trans-continental railway should be built, British Columbia came in; Prince Edward Island joined two years later; the Province of Manitoba was carved out of the former Hudson's Bay Territories in 1870, and the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan in 1905. Newfoundland still remained outside the Dominion. Once the provinces were linked up politically it was

possible to go ahead with the construction of the much needed railways. As the years went by, people, not only from Britain, but from other parts of Europe, poured in to settle there.

This story of one of our Dominions is, up to a point, the story of them all. But only up to a point. The British settlers who came to Australia at the end of the eighteenth century, unlike the British settlers in Canada, had not to reckon with the presence of a great French community, firmly rooted in the soil of Canada, and firmly rooted, too, in the religion and traditions of pre-Revolutionary France. They were transported convicts—hardened criminals some of them, others, more innocent, starving poachers from the country or starving rioters from the towns—for New South Wales and Tasmania began as convict settlements, after the War of American Independence had closed the plantations there to transported prisoners. Many of them found in Australia the opportunity that had been denied them at home, and went in for farming. They were joined by settlers of a different type—young men with money enough to pay for the six months' voyage and to buy stock and farm implements—who in the first half of the nineteenth century founded other colonies, Western Australia, South Australia, and Victoria, and insisted on the transportation of convicts to New South Wales being stopped. In 1851 this was done, though Western Australia continued to receive convicts from Britain till 1868, when the punishment of transportation was abolished. In 1842 New South Wales got a representative constitution; two-thirds of the members of its legislative council were elected. By 1855 there was responsible government in New South Wales, Tasmania, South Australia, and Victoria; Queensland had to wait for it till 1859, and Western Australia till 1890.

An account of the Australian colonies would be incom-

plete without some reference to the great part that gold-mining has played in their development. No doubt agriculture, industry, and commerce are more enduring foundations for the prosperity of a country, but a new land wants capital and inhabitants to develop its resources, and unless there is a great attraction these will come slowly. In 1851 gold-fields were discovered in New South Wales and Victoria. Soon afterwards gold was found in Queensland, and last of all, Western Australia turned out as lucky as the others. This brought a host of immigrants bent on making their fortunes. The Australian harbours were crammed with empty ships. In the whole of Melbourne only two policemen were to be seen—immigrants, sailors, policemen, all had gone to the diggings. Of course they did not all succeed, but they made the fortune of Australia. Many who had come to search for gold remained to engage in the less romantic tasks of farming and trading. In 1850 Victoria was sparsely peopled; its capital, Melbourne, was scarcely more than a village. Now it is a stately city, and with its suburbs contains approximately a million inhabitants. The older city of Sydney, in New South Wales, with its magnificent natural harbour and great bridge, has a population of over a million.

Federation came to Australia more slowly than to Canada. In Australia the settlers were slow to penetrate into the interior, much of which is waterless, and tended to bunch together in great cities near the coast, like Melbourne and Sydney—centres of population separated by deserts, and so more easily linked by sea than by land. In 1900, however, the Commonwealth of Australia was established on the Canadian, or rather, the American plan, by which the individual states were left with a larger measure of control over their own affairs. The six States send representatives to a Commonwealth

Common-
wealth of
Australia.

Parliament, containing a Senate and a House of Representatives, which meets in the federal capital, Canberra.

New Zealand, the most British of all our Dominions, and at the same time the only one where white settlers and natives live together as equals and friends, was taken possession of as a colony in 1840. It received responsible government in 1856, but it was not till the long and hard-fought Maori War between the settlers and natives ended in 1870 that the colony began to prosper. In 1907 New Zealand assumed the rank of a Dominion. Since then, in two world wars, Maori soldiers have fought side by side with the descendants of their fathers' enemies.

There are other parts of the Empire where old wars are not so easily forgotten, and where the colour bar is still maintained.

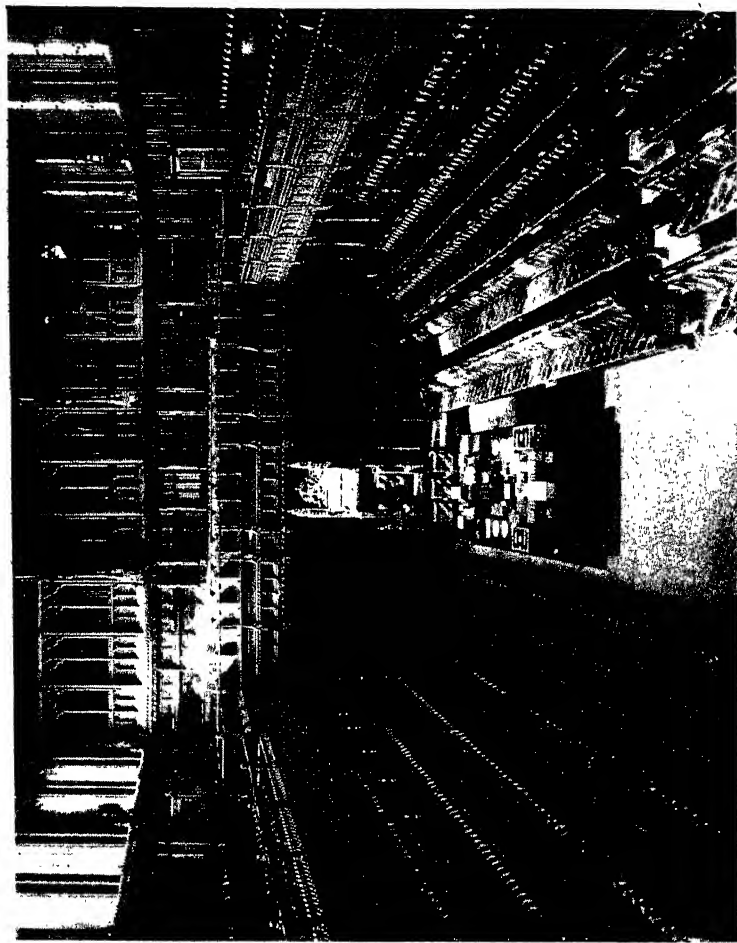
In 1870, except in the south and in Algeria, the European settlements formed a scanty fringe on the coast of Africa. African colonies could not prosper while this was the case, for as a rule the climate of the coast was deadly to Europeans. Sierra Leone was called "the White Man's Grave", but many other coast stations equally deserved the name. The interior, being higher, was more free from the fevers that haunted the marshy coasts of East and West Africa. But much of the interior was then a No-man's Land, only half-explored, belonging to savage tribes who owned no European masters. Now, however, almost the whole continent is parcelled out among European nations.

Cape Colony came finally into our hands from the Dutch in 1815. It was only very gradually that our power spread inland. East from the Cape the white settlers began to come into collision with the savage Bantu tribes, who had been gradually moving down from Central into South Africa during the preceding century. Further,

the Boers, the descendants of the Dutch colonists, did not get on well with the British, and in 1836 some thousands of them trekked northwards, taking with them wives and children, flocks and herds, and settled in Natal. But British colonists were already settled on the Natal coast, and in the end most of the Boers recrossed the Drakensberg mountains into the interior and founded the Orange Free State and the Transvaal Republic, so as to get clear of British rule. Meanwhile Cape Colony continued to prosper and, in 1854, held its first parliament. By degrees British power spread northwards. The discovery of diamonds at Kimberley led to the adding of Griqualand. In 1877, under Disraeli, who never shrank from adding to the Empire, the Transvaal was annexed and, two years later, the Zulus wiped out at the battle of Ulundi, after they had surprised and massacred a British force at Isandhlwana. One inglorious war followed another. In 1880 the Boers rebelled. Being excellent shots and skilled in irregular warfare among rocky and broken country, they completely defeated the British forces. In the last battle, at Majuba Hill in 1881, Sir George Colley, the British commander, was killed. Gladstone, who thought that the annexation of the Transvaal had been unjust, gave back to the Boers a modified form of independence.

At the time this did not seem very important, but the case was altered five years later by the discovery of gold mines in the Transvaal. Thousands of immigrants, most of them British, crowded in, till the Boer farmers thought that they were going to be swamped by a flood of foreign fortune-hunters. Accordingly, the "Uitlanders", as the newcomers were called, were taxed heavily, but were refused any share in the government of the country.

At the same time other important events for the future of South Africa were taking place. In 1889 Cecil Rhodes obtained a charter for the British South Africa Company



XIV. THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
(See Note on p. xvi)

—"the Chartered Company"—which enabled it to acquire and develop the great territory that is now called Rhodesia. A year later he became the Prime Minister of Cape Colony. So far he had been trusted by Boer and Briton alike. He had long dreamt dreams of a South Africa united under British rule, and now it seemed that he could make his dreams come true. He was in too great a hurry, however; the Jameson Raid of 1896, an unsuccessful attempt by a body of Chartered Company mounted police, led by one of his friends, to overthrow the rule of the Boer President Kruger in the Transvaal, made the Boers suspect that he was trying to undermine their position, and that the British Government was behind him. With the people of the neighbouring Boer republic, the Orange Free State, they therefore made plans to free themselves completely from British control. They gathered arms and stores, mostly from Germany, and in October, 1899, they declared war. At first it seemed as if the tragedy of 1881 were to be repeated, with an even more tragic sequel: their swiftly moving mounted riflemen inflicted defeat after defeat on the British forces. In the summer of 1900 the tide of battle turned; the veteran Lord Roberts outflanked them, forced them to retire northwards, and entered their capitals, Pretoria and Bloemfontein. It seemed that the war was finished, and Lord Roberts returned to England. It was only beginning. The elusive Boers fought, and ran away, and fought again, for two years, till in 1902 Lord Kitchener wore them down, and they surrendered to superior forces.

The Boer
War, 1899-
1902.

By the Treaty of Vereeniging the Transvaal and the Orange Free State were annexed by Great Britain. In 1907 they each received responsible government; in 1910 both of them joined Cape Colony and Natal to form the Union of South Africa. Of this Union the first Prime

Formation
of the
Union of
South
Africa.

Minister was General Botha, who had been commander-in-chief of the Boer armies that fought against us.

South Africa differs from the other Dominions in one important respect. In the other three the majority of the inhabitants are of European descent. This does not mean of British origin only. In Canada, in addition to the three million French Canadians, who still use the speech and practise the religion of their French ancestors, there are many immigrants from northern Europe and from the United States. But in South Africa not only are the inhabitants of Dutch descent equal in numbers to the British, but British and Dutch together are in a minority in a population that is mainly African. They are careful, however, to exclude natives and Asiatics from any share in the government of the Union, and if they are represented at all, it is by men who are not of their race.

In addition to these self-governing Dominions, in
The addition to India, which is a continent rather than a
Colonies. country, there was a far-flung Colonial Empire, containing colonies and protectorates, and spheres of influence, all alike in that they were situated in the tropics, where existence is difficult for Europeans, and that, except for a few officials, traders, or officers commanding native troops, their inhabitants were coloured people, black, brown, or yellow. This third Colonial Empire was enormously increased in the last two decades of the nineteenth century by the acquisition, in Asia, of Upper Burma and the greater part of Malaya, and, in Africa, among other territories, of British East Africa and Nigeria. But to neither the old colonies, such as those in the West Indies, nor to the new was full responsible government given. The inhabitants, it was argued, were not yet capable of using it wisely; some might never be capable at all. So Great Britain was in the position, not of a tyrant, but of a guardian or trustee, controlling

and supervising the colonies through governors and other officials appointed by the home government, till such time as they would be able to rule themselves.

This did not mean that the colonies had no voice in the management of their own affairs. In some of the older colonies there are elected assemblies, with limited powers, or assemblies composed partly of elected members, partly of members nominated by the government; in some of the newer ones, like Nigeria and Malaya, "indirect rule" has been established—the natives are still ruled by their hereditary chiefs or rajahs, but they in their turn are the vassals or agents of the British Government.

It was a precious heritage, an Empire far larger than the Roman Empire, far more widely scattered, filled by a greater diversity of folk. After Carthage went down, Rome had no rival for five centuries: at the end of the nineteenth century it seemed as if Britain were to be, not Rome, but Carthage, a Carthage menaced by more than one vindictive Rome.

CHAPTER 38

THE MARCH OF EVENTS: 1886-1914

The defeat of the Liberals in 1886 over the question of Home Rule for Ireland, and the advent of Lord Salisbury as Prime Minister in place of Gladstone, ushered in twenty years of almost uninterrupted Conservative government. There was a short interruption after the 1892 election, when Gladstone piloted a Home Rule Bill through the House of Commons only to see it rejected by the House of Lords. He resigned in 1894, when he was eighty-five years old, in favour of the Earl of Rose-

bery, the Liberal leader in the House of Lords, but the 1895 election saw the Conservatives back in power with Lord Salisbury once more at their head. The fusion of the Conservative and Liberal Unionist parties was now complete. Joseph Chamberlain, once the most energetic of Liberal ministers, the most persistent in his demands for reform at home, became the most enthusiastic of Colonial Secretaries in a Conservative cabinet, untiring in his efforts to extend and at the same time to consolidate the Empire, and to reclaim its more backward regions and peoples. The people of England shared his pride in it, a pride which reached its height at the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, when detachments of troops of almost every race, from every part of the Empire, marched in a long glittering procession through the streets of London.

Diamond
Jubilee of
Queen
Victoria,
1897.

One great domestic reform was indeed carried through: in 1889 an act was passed establishing elected County Councils, which were made responsible, among other things, for the supervision of public health services and the maintenance of roads. By the Education Act of 1902, which did for secondary education what the 1870 Act had done for primary education, the County Councils were made responsible for education within their areas as well.

British
Industrial
Supremacy
threat-
ened.

In general, however, the Conservative government in these twenty years gave most of its attention to what was happening outside Britain. It had reason enough, as we shall see. But at home there was much to give it thought. Though Britain was still growing more wealthy and more comfortable, the wheels were slowing down, and here and there stopping altogether. The population was increasing—from 33 millions in Great Britain in 1891 to 41 millions twenty years later—but not nearly as fast as the population of Germany and the United States, which in the same period had risen from 49 millions to 65 millions, and from 63 millions to 92 millions respectively. This in-

crease in population was the symptom of another change: Britain was no longer the sole "workshop of the world"; she was one, and the smallest one, of three competing industrial concerns. Our shipyards were still busy, building ships with steel imported from Germany; the looms and spindles in our factories were still clacking and humming, turning out cheap cottons for India and China, or linens and woollens of the finest quality for the wealthy continental or American purchaser. But many foreign markets, which had once taken all that we could send them, were now closed to British goods. The expectations of Bright and Cobden had not been realized. Other countries, some of the colonies even, had started industries of their own and protected these industries by imposing tariffs on imported, which usually meant British, goods. That was not all: the foreign industrialist was often able to manufacture goods more cheaply than his British rival, and so sell them in Britain at a lower price than the British manufacturer, who now began to wonder if Free Trade was such a good thing as he had been taught to believe. At the same time British industry seemed to be losing its inventiveness and resourcefulness; we were compelled, for example, to import many articles from America, because we did not know how to make them ourselves. Sewing-machines, typewriters, the electric telegraph, electric lighting—all are American inventions. The inventor of the telephone was a Scotsman, but he had made America his home.

As for British agriculture, American and Canadian competition had almost ruined it. Cheap imported wheat, cheap imported tinned and frozen meat drove the prices for farm produce down and down till many a farmer was forced to give up the struggle. In the thirty years between 1870 and the close of the century the acreage under wheat in England diminished by more than half.

**Precarious
Position
of British
Agriculture.**

Proposed
Return to
Protection.

To Chamberlain the remedy was plain—a return to Protection. This he first propounded in 1903, after Mr. Balfour had replaced his uncle, Lord Salisbury, as Prime Minister. Free Trade, he argued, had worked only when other nations had practised it too; in the present state of affairs it left British industry and agriculture defenceless against foreign competition. Save the first by imposing a tax on cheap imported goods, and the second by imposing a tax on imported corn. At the same time bind the different parts of the Empire together by the establishment, if possible, of complete Empire Free Trade, or, at least, of imperial preference—a lower tariff on goods sent from one part of the Empire to another. Balfour and the majority of the Conservatives were sympathetic but hesitated to commit themselves; the Liberals at once attacked Chamberlain's proposals. If you taxed imports, they argued, you must tax corn, and a tax on corn meant a sharp rise in the cost of living, or, what was the same thing, a fall in the real value of wages.

The Unemployment
Problem.

Though the wages given to skilled workmen enabled them to live in a fair degree of comfort, the wages given to unskilled labourers were still lamentably low, and, what was even worse, uncertain. Both skilled and unskilled workmen suffered from this uncertainty. When trade was bad—and after 1870 trade depressions had become more frequent and more severe—when orders were few, an employer tried to cut down his expenses by dismissing some of his workmen. Some employers maintained that a “reserve of labour”, to be taken on or paid off according to the fluctuations of trade, was absolutely essential. But when the workman was dismissed, his wages stopped; he had nothing to live on except his savings, and it was difficult to save anything on an unskilled labourer's wages. His condition was even worse should he lose his employment through illness,

for then he had to solve the double problem of maintaining himself and his family, and paying for medical treatment, out of nothing, or next to nothing.

To some it seemed that Parliament would face these and similar problems only when it contained a solid group of members who were working men; to others it seemed that this Labour Party must go into Parliament with a clear-cut and comprehensive policy, that it must be a definitely Socialist party, working for the establishment of a system in which there would be a very large measure—far larger than either of the older parties were willing to contemplate—of state ownership and state control. The council of a great city, which was elected by the people of that city, they argued, owned and ran its transport system, paid monthly salaries or weekly wages to the staff out of the fares collected from the passengers, and, instead of pocketing the surplus, put it into the city funds, to be used for the good of the citizens. Why, they argued, should not Parliament do for the whole country what a municipal council does for a single town—why should it not own and control the railways? And why should it stop at the railways? Only, they argued, when it went on to establish a really complete system of public ownership and public control, could it guarantee decent, comfortable and healthy living conditions to the great majority of the people of Britain.

Emergence
of Labour
Party.

One must not assume that every working man who voted for the Labour Party was a thorough-going Socialist, or that every Socialist was a working man. Still, to begin with, the Labour members of Parliament were drawn mainly from the trade unions: as members received no salary, it was almost impossible for a man of moderate means to become a member unless he could count on the financial support of a trade union or some similar organization.

The Parliamentary Labour Party was formed in 1900, but it succeeded in getting only two members into Parliament in the General Election of that year, in which the Conservatives were again returned, with a large majority. The election of 1906 saw the situation reversed: the Liberals were returned with a large, and, if one included the Irish Nationalists, and the Labour members, now over forty strong, an overwhelming majority over the Conservatives.

**Social
Legisla-
tion.** The Liberal government, first under Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and then, after his death, in 1908, under H. H. Asquith, pressed forward with a number of social reforms. In 1908 it instituted Old Age Pensions, and fixed a minimum wage rate in the mining industry. In 1909 it tackled the evils of sweated labour—underpaid work carried on in the homes of the workers—by establishing Trade Boards. But many other measures that passed the House of Commons were rejected by the House of Lords, where there was a large permanent majority of Conservatives. The Lords, it was noticed, never rejected a bill when the Conservatives had a majority in the House of Commons; since 1892 they had rejected a larger and larger proportion of Liberal measures. As yet, however, they had observed the unwritten law that they should not reject the Budget, which settles how the revenue for the year is to be raised and spent, or any other finance bill. But, in 1909, they rejected the Budget presented by Lloyd George, the Liberal Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Liberals took up the challenge. They fought and won two successive General Elections in 1910, though with greatly reduced majorities, and in 1911, fortified by the promise of the new King, George V (1910–36), that if the Lords persisted in their resistance, he would create a large number of Liberal peers, secured the passage of the Parliament Act through

both Houses. This Act forbade the Lords to reject or amend any genuine money bill, and in effect allowed them to hold up for two years, but not to reject outright, any other bill of which they disapproved. If a bill passed the Commons in three successive sessions, and was on each occasion rejected by the Lords, it would, despite the Lords' disapproval, receive the royal assent and become law. In the third place, the maximum duration of Parliament was reduced from seven to five years. At the same time, the Commons agreed that members of their house should now be paid for their services.

The Par-
liament
Act, 1911.

The Liberal government, freed from the fear that the Lords would wreck all their measures, passed in 1911 an ambitious National Insurance Act, establishing a system of compulsory unemployment and health insurance. It was a contributory scheme. The money to provide medicine and treatment by a doctor if the insured person fell ill, to pay him a weekly allowance if he was unemployed, was taken from insurance funds made up of regular weekly contributions from employers and employees, with the addition of a grant from the State. The scope of the Act, which at first made unemployment benefit available to only a few trades, was widely extended in the next thirty years to provide greater benefits, and to make them available to more and more people.

Misfortune, however, attended the bill for Irish Home Rule which was introduced in 1912. The Liberals owed their success in their struggle for the Parliament Act to the steady support of the eighty Irish Nationalist members. It was inevitable that the Liberals should, in return, secure the passage of the bill through the Commons; inevitable, too, that the Lords would reject it. Neither Liberal nor Irish Nationalist members were unduly perturbed; they knew that by the operation of the Parliament Act, the bill would become law in the autumn of

The Irish
Crisis.

1914. But as the time drew near, the twenty-year-old fears of domination by the Catholic Irish of the south returned to excite the Protestant inhabitants of Ulster. They armed, and prepared to resist by force any attempt to impose Home Rule upon them. Their action looked dangerously like rebellion, a rebellion which, as they would have the support of many British officers stationed in Ireland, would bring confusion and ruin not only to Ireland but to Britain as well. But as the clouds of civil war were gathering over Ireland, another cloud, denser, darker, shot with fire, had formed in south-eastern Europe. It spread eastward to Russia, westward across France, and now, at the beginning of August, 1914, it had reached the farther shore of the English Channel.

CHAPTER 39

GATHERING CLOUDS

The Unification of Germany, 1864-71.

To explain whence this black cloud came, we must turn back for fifty years, to the time of Palmerston. We have seen how in 1864 he threatened, but did nothing, when the Prussians invaded Denmark. He did not realize that the "Iron Chancellor", Bismarck, who was the master, rather than the servant, of King William I of Prussia, had already taken the first step towards the creation of a united Germany—a great military state led and dominated by Prussia. The second step was taken in 1866, when Bismarck started a short, sharp war against Austria which left Prussia the undisputed leader of the Germanic states; the third in 1870, when he engineered a war in which France suffered a humiliating defeat, and was stripped of the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine.

The goal was finally reached in 1871, when, in the palace of the French kings at Versailles, the King of Prussia was proclaimed German Emperor.

Here Bismarck paused, for he had no intention of waging risky or unprofitable wars, or of gaining by war what could more easily be gained by diplomacy. In 1879 he entered into a Dual Alliance with Austria; in 1882 he transformed this Dual Alliance into the Triple Alliance by admitting Italy to the partnership; at the same time, by making a short-term treaty with Russia, which he renewed every three years, he took care not to alienate the only other great military power on the continent of Europe. The French might drape the statue of the lost city of Strasbourg in black; he knew that they would never fight alone against a combination of three great powers. He knew, too, that he did not need either to crush or to conciliate Britain—had not the Crown Prince Frederick married the Princess Royal, the eldest child of Queen Victoria, and would not a grandson of the British Queen rule one day over Germany? The British Government and people looked on a war with Germany as unthinkable: the enemy that they really feared was France or Russia. Headed off from the Balkan Peninsula and the Mediterranean by the decisions taken in 1878 at the Congress of Berlin, Russia went ahead with a policy of expansion in Asia, which in 1885 seemed to threaten the security of the North-West Frontier of India. And on one occasion at least British and French rivalry in Africa almost plunged the two countries into war.

As early as 1830, when the French conquest of Algeria began, France had aimed at building up a great colonial empire in North Africa. It was French money and French engineering skill that made the construction of the Suez Canal possible, and after the completion of the canal in 1869, the French became interested in the maintenance of

Policy of
Bismarck.

British and
French in
North
Africa.

law and order in Egypt. If the country were misgoverned, **Egypt.** if a rebellion broke out, the millions of francs invested in the canal and other Egyptian enterprises would be lost. But British money, too, was invested in Egypt, and after the British Government had bought the Khedive's Suez Canal shares in 1875, it too became interested in Egyptian internal affairs. To prevent Egypt being altogether misruled and going bankrupt, the two countries set up a Dual Control of Egypt, promising, however, to keep the Khedive Tewfik on the throne, as long as he governed to their satisfaction. In 1882, however, an Egyptian officer, Arabi Pasha, began a revolt against Tewfik, and seized Alexandria. There were riots, and many Europeans were robbed and murdered. It was plainly necessary to intervene. France, however, refused to do so, and Britain had to act alone. Alexandria was bombarded by the British fleet; Cairo was taken by surprise after an army under Sir Garnet Wolseley had scattered Arabi's forces at Tel-el-Kebir. The French now saw to their chagrin that their refusal to co-operate had left Britain in sole and complete control of Egypt. The Khedive might be the nominal ruler of Egypt: the real ruler was the man later known as Lord Cromer, the British Consul-General in Egypt.

The Sudan. Arabi's defeat showed how worthless the Egyptian army was, and this was made still more clear by events in the Sudan, a great region to the south of Egypt over which the Khedive was supposed to rule. A fanatic prophet, the Mahdi, gathered a body of Dervish followers and beat the Egyptian troops wherever he met them. Great numbers flocked to his standards, and in 1883 he routed and destroyed an Egyptian force of 10,000 men commanded by an English officer, Hicks Pasha. The British Government sent out General Gordon to organize the safe withdrawal of the Egyptian garrisons in the

Sudan, now in danger of being overwhelmed by the dervishes. Gordon established his headquarters at Khartoum. Retreat was abhorrent to him; he would have organized a reconquest rather than a withdrawal, but advance was impossible, and soon retreat became impossible, too. When news reached England in the early summer of 1884 that Khartoum was cut off and Gordon was in danger, the government debated and delayed for months before it sent out a relief expedition. The relief expedition was too deliberate in its movements; it reached Khartoum only to discover that Gordon, after gallantly defending the town for nine months, had been killed two days previously. So the Sudan was lost, and left to the rule of fierce and ignorant fanatics.

Not until 1896 was the work of reconquest begun by a mixed force of British and Egyptian troops, commanded by General—afterwards Earl—Kitchener. Slowly, methodically, he pushed up the Nile Valley to Khartoum. Outside Omdurman the Dervishes fought a desperate battle, but it was their last. On the evening of the same day, 2nd September, 1898, Khartoum, after thirteen years of Dervish rule, was recovered.

A few days later Kitchener heard that a party of French troops had reached Fashoda, a village on the White Nile, three hundred miles to the south of Khartoum, and had hoisted the French flag. In other words, they were trying to annex territory to which the Anglo-Egyptian Government considered that it had a prior claim. Kitchener hurried southward at the head of a force superior in numbers to the French, and ordered the commander, Major Marchand, to haul down the flag. Marchand had no choice but to obey, but when he reported the affair to his government, government and people alike were furiously angry. For a few days Britain and France stood on the brink of war. But the storm blew over, for there

**The
Fashoda
Episode,
1898.**

were many far-seeing Frenchmen, like the French Foreign Minister, Delcassé, who could not forget that France had another, and more dangerous, neighbour.

"Splendid Isolation." It was fear of that neighbour that had made France, in 1895, enter into a Dual Alliance with Russia. Britain alone, among the six great powers of Europe, had no allies. Her statesmen maintained that it was safer to maintain a policy of "splendid isolation"; that one could not become an ally of another nation without being dragged into its quarrels with its neighbours. The Boer War opened their eyes: they saw that in every country in Europe the people rejoiced over Britain's humiliating defeats, and derided her tardy and costly victories; they saw that if Britain had not possessed a fleet at least as powerful as the two next largest fleets, the other European nations would have attacked her and shared out her colonies. It is true that the Dominions had come to the aid of the mother country, that contingents of Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand volunteers had fought in South Africa, but the Dominions were far away, and their total population came to little more than ten millions.

Britain and Germany. In its search for allies the British Government turned first of all to Germany. There in 1888 the Emperor Frederick had succeeded his father, the old Emperor William I. The new Emperor, already stricken by a mortal illness when he ascended the throne, died before the end of the year, and was succeeded by his son, the irresponsible and headstrong William II. The young Emperor dismissed Bismarck, and adopted a more aggressive foreign policy, against the consequences of which France and Russia tried to insure themselves by forming the Dual Alliance. At the time of the Jameson Raid, too, he sent a telegram to President Kruger which seemed like a threat of interference in South African affairs. Britain at once mobilized a special battle fleet. But as the rival

of our two ancient enemies, as the possessor of the most efficient and best equipped, if not the largest, army in Europe, Germany seemed a most desirable ally. The British overtures to Germany, however, first made by Joseph Chamberlain in 1899, met with a cold reception, and were renewed in 1902 only to be abandoned. In the same year Britain did secure an ally in the shape of Japan. To us, who know what happened in 1941, it seems a curious choice, but in 1902 it was Russia, not Japan, that seemed the more dangerous enemy.

But was Russia really the most dangerous of our potential enemies? British statesmen began to ask themselves this question when the new German Navy Law was passed in 1900. Hitherto Germany had contented herself with building up the finest army in Europe. It did not worry us, for we had by far the most powerful fleet, and Germany had next to none. The finest army in Europe would have to stay in Europe if it were not escorted by a fleet powerful enough to destroy any British fleet that might be sent against it, and so clear the way for an invasion of Britain. But now, by the Navy Law, Germany would in a few years have a fleet larger and more powerful than the British fleet. "Against whom is this new fleet to be directed?" people asked anxiously. To this question there could be only one answer: against the only European nation whose existence as a nation depends on her supremacy at sea—against Great Britain. The British Government met the challenge in two ways: first, by strengthening the navy, not only by increasing the number of sailors and ships, but also, after 1905, by building Dreadnoughts—all big-gun battleships—more powerful than any that Germany then possessed; in the second place, by establishing friendly relations with the two other great European powers that were not members of the Triple Alliance—France and Russia.

Anglo-German
Naval
Rivalry.

Britain and
France.
The
Entente
Cordiale,
1904.

By the Anglo-French Agreement of 1904 long-standing disputes between the two countries, one as old as the reign of Queen Anne, were definitely settled. Old jealousies about Egypt were forgotten. France admitted the right of the British to occupy Egypt; Britain agreed in return not to hinder French expansion in any other part of North Africa. Thus the *Entente Cordiale*—a friendly understanding—was established between the two countries. The *Entente* was not an alliance, for the British Government made no promise to fight on the side of France. It was more than a vague friendliness, however, as Germany found in 1905 and again in 1911, when Britain joined with France in protesting against her interference with the French plans for controlling Morocco. On the second occasion the German Government sent a warship to seize the Moroccan port of Agadir, but withdrew it and agreed to leave the French alone, when it saw that the British Government was prepared to regard France's quarrel as its own.

The Triple
Entente,
1907.

The change from a Conservative to a Liberal government at the end of 1905 made no difference to the foreign policy of the country. In 1907 the Liberal Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, made an agreement with Russia similar to the agreement with France which his Unionist predecessor, Lord Lansdowne, had made in 1904. Many Liberals, however, were suspicious of these agreements. They were meant to preserve the peace, their supporters argued; Germany would hesitate to attack Britain if she knew that she in her turn would be attacked by the two great states whom Britain had made her friends. Yes, their opponents answered, but these states will not support Britain out of mere friendship; they will do so only if Britain in her turn binds herself to support them. So Britain, by the very measures that she has taken to avoid war, may be dragged into a war which is really no



WINSTON SPENCER
CHURCHILL

(See Note on p. xvi)



DAVID LLOYD
GEORGE

(See Note on p. xvi)

XV. GREAT PARLIAMENTARY LEADERS OF THE
TWENTIETH CENTURY

concern of hers. To this Sir Edward Grey could always say that where there was no treaty, there was no obligation.

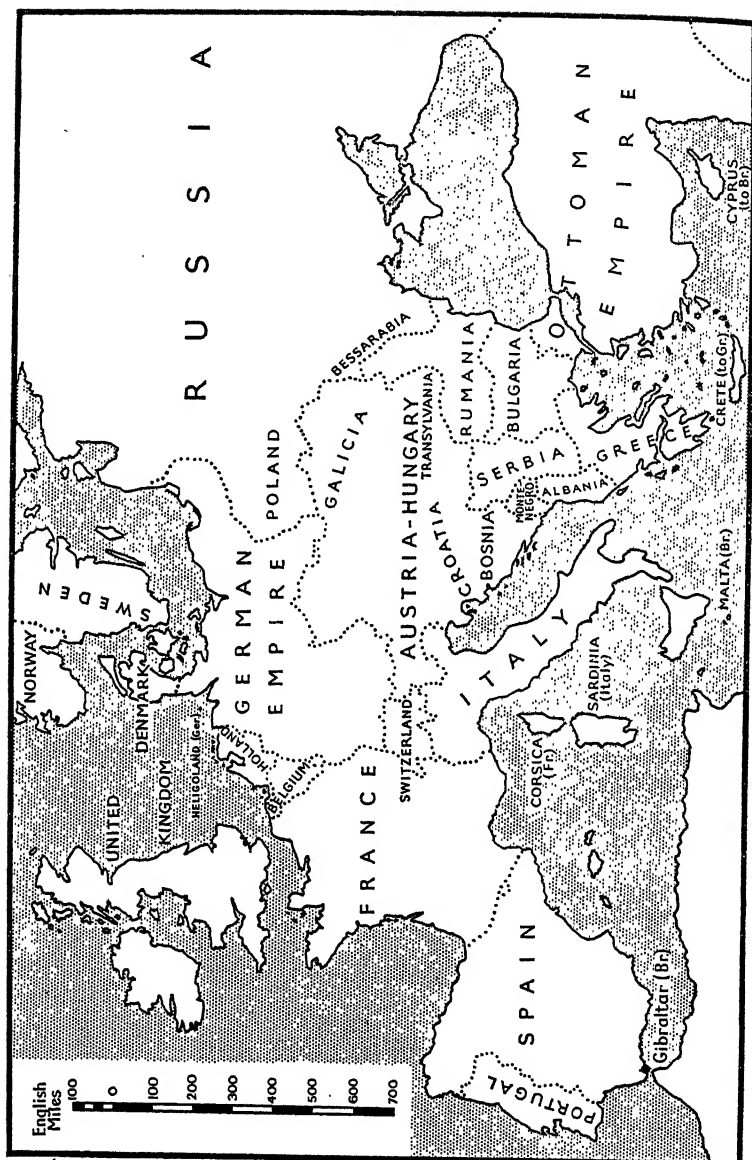
There was no treaty, but there was an obligation. By an arrangement with the chiefs of the French navy, the British warships that had been stationed in the Mediterranean were withdrawn to home waters, and their places taken by French squadrons recalled from their North Sea and Atlantic stations. In other words, by leaving the defence of Egypt and of her Mediterranean bases to France, Britain was undertaking the defence of the northern and western coasts of France. In addition, without the knowledge of most members of Parliament, and even of some members of the Cabinet, conversations had been carried on between British and French—and latterly Russian—officers of high rank, and plans drawn up for the co-operation of a British Expeditionary Force with the French Army in the event of France being attacked by Germany.

It seemed as if the Agadir Incident in 1911 had been meant to be a prelude to that attack, and as if the unexpected firmness of the Liberal government had made Germany give way. Germany gave way, not because she didn't want war, a war on a larger scale than her 1870-1 war with France, and therefore far more profitable than that very profitable venture, but because she was not quite ready for that war. By 1914, however, Germany had completed her preparations—she had a large and well-trained army, she had built a huge navy, including battleships more powerful than any Britain possessed, and she had deepened the Kiel Canal to allow her largest ships to pass from the Baltic to the North Sea.

The war, when it came, began in the Balkans. In 1908, after a revolution in Turkey, Germany's ally, Austria, annexed the two former Turkish provinces of Bosnia and

German Ambitions.

Trouble in the Balkans.



Herzegovina, of which the Berlin Congress had made her protector in 1878. The inhabitants of these provinces were Slavs, many of them Serbs. The action of Austria therefore aroused the suspicions of the Serbs, who saw their long-cherished hopes of building up a bigger Serbia destroyed, and infuriated the Russian Government, which regarded it as an attempt to establish that control over the Slav states in the Balkans which Russia thought she had a natural right to exercise. But the Russian Government knew that the army had not yet recovered from the tremendous losses inflicted on it by the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5; it knew, too, that if it dared to move against Austria, Germany would at once come to the rescue of her ally "in shining armour".

In 1912 war broke out among the Balkan states. Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece entered into an alliance against Turkey, and stripped the Turks of all their possessions in Europe except Constantinople and a few miles round about. In the following year, Bulgaria, dissatisfied with her share of the spoil, turned upon her former allies, and was defeated. It seemed as if Austria and Russia would be involved in the quarrels of their protégés, but a settlement was effected by a conference of the powers. Amicable discussion of differences, it seemed, was more effective than war. But though Eastern Europe was nominally at peace, fear and jealousy kept the smouldering fires of hatred alight. And the flames of war broke out once more. On 28th June, 1914, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian throne, was assassinated in Serajevo.

Assassination of
Archduke
Franz
Ferdinand,
1914.

CHAPTER 40

THE FIRST WORLD WAR

Outbreak of First World War, 1914. A pistol-shot, fired in a remote Balkan town which probably none of them had ever seen, at a prince who was no prince of theirs, brought about the death in battle of one million men of British blood. At first the Austrian government did nothing beyond asserting that the assassination was the result of a plot hatched in Serbia. Then, about a month later, with the acquiescence, if not with the active encouragement of Germany, it sent an ultimatum to Serbia containing demands the acceptance of which would have meant the end of Serbia as an independent state. The Austrian ministers knew that it was highly improbable that Russia would stand by and see Serbia wiped out, but they decided to take the risk, and when Serbia rejected the obnoxious demands in the ultimatum, declared war. Almost simultaneously the order for a general mobilization was given in Austria, Russia, and Germany. Germany, which had hesitated for a moment, was now backing up Austria. She demanded that Russia should revoke her mobilization orders forthwith, and that France should undertake to remain neutral whatever happened. Both demands were refused, and on 1st August, 1914, Germany declared war on Russia and France.

France appeals to Britain. The French Government looked to Britain to come to its aid. The French President appealed to King George, but the King had to be guided by his Cabinet, and Cabinet, Parliament and people were alike divided. Winston Churchill, the First Lord of the Admiralty, had already taken the precaution of ordering the fleet, which had been mobilized for the summer manœuvres, to re-

main ready for action. Like Asquith and Grey, he thought that both honour and interest forbade Britain to stand aside while Germany crushed France and stripped her of her great colonial empire. These ministers made it clear that if the German fleet attempted a descent on the French Channel or Atlantic coast, it would find its way blocked by the British fleet. But further they could not go. Many of their supporters argued that the *Entente Cordiale* was merely a friendly understanding, not a binding alliance, that though a German attack on France was regrettable, Germany was almost compelled to make it to forestall French co-operation with Russia, and that, in any case, it would be folly to shed British blood and spend British treasure in a quarrel with which Britain had really nothing to do, and in which she need take no part. They did not see that while Germany might not want war with Britain there and then, she wanted it some time or other, and that a Britain which had allowed all her possible allies to be defeated would not be able to stand up against a Germany swollen with conquests.

It was the German invasion of Belgium that swept Parliament and people from their isolationism. To understand this sudden change we must go back to 1839. In that year a treaty guaranteeing Belgian independence was signed by the representatives of five great European powers—Britain, France, Russia, Austria, and Prussia—all of whom bound themselves to respect Belgian neutrality. When in 1871 the King of Prussia became German Emperor, the new German Empire inherited the responsibilities and obligations of the Kingdom of Prussia. Now Germany was preparing to invade France. Only two invasion routes seemed practicable, by the French eastern frontier or through Belgium. But France, remembering the German invasion from the east in 1870,

German
invasion of
Belgium.

had so strengthened her defences on her eastern frontier that another invasion from that quarter seemed hopeless to the German staff. By crossing Belgium, however, the weakly defended Franco-Belgian frontiers could be reached and pierced, and the road to Paris opened. The Germans, therefore, in defiance of the 1839 Treaty, invaded Belgium. Britain at once sent an ultimatum to Germany reminding her of the Treaty, and demanding the withdrawal of her troops from Belgium before midnight on 4th August. No reply was received from Germany, and when midnight came, Britain was at war.

Thus the immediate cause of Britain's entry into the war was the German violation of Belgian neutrality, a neutrality which Britain, like Germany, had pledged herself to respect. But even if the Treaty of 1839 had never been signed, Britain would probably have made the German invasion of Belgium a reason for entering the war, for English statesmen have always seen in the occupation of Belgium or Holland by a great military power a menace to their national security. To avert this threat they went to war with Spain in Queen Elizabeth's time, with the France of Louis XIV in the time of William III and Queen Anne, and with republican France in the time of George III.

So the war, which had started as a mere Balkan quarrel, in a few weeks had spread to the great European nations, and Britain, France and Russia were ranged against Germany and Austria, and their ally Turkey. Italy, which had refused to join Germany and Austria on the ground that the Triple Alliance was meant to be a defensive alliance only, went over to the Allies early in 1915. Already the flames had spread beyond the bounds of Europe, and British Dominions and Colonies in every part of the world supported the mother country. Before the war ended fighting had taken place in every corner of

the world and on every sea; and all the German colonies had been captured by the Allies or by forces raised in British overseas territories.

In organization, in training, and in equipment, the German troops were superior to their opponents. They had more heavy guns, more machine-guns, and more aeroplanes—though in 1914 even the best aeroplane was a slow and flimsy contraption, used only for reconnaissance. As the German army with over four million men outnumbered the French army, or any army that Russia would be capable of putting into the field for many weeks, the German general staff decided to attack France, while remaining on the defensive in the east. Then after France had been crushed the whole German army was to be flung against Russia. At first it looked as if the plan would succeed. The French army attacked all along the line, but was broken and driven back; the Germans swept across Belgium, all but overwhelming the small British Expeditionary Force that tried to hold up its advance, and almost reached Paris. The Allies counter-attacked, however, and at the Battle of the Marne drove back the grey-green hosts. But not very far. The Germans halted and entrenched themselves in a system of improvised fortifications. In vain the Allies tried to push them out or work round their flanks; they extended their front, constructing more and more trenches as they did so, till at the end of 1914 the battle line stretched without a break from the Belgian coast to the Alps.

It altered but little during the next three years, though again and again the British and French tried to break through the network of trenches bristling with machine-guns, defended in front by almost impenetrable barbed wire, and behind by batteries of light and heavy guns. Twice the Germans in their turn launched heavy attacks against the Allied lines. Their attempts to break through

German
Invasion of
France.

Battle of
the Marne.

Unsuccessful
British and French
attacks,
1915-17

at Ypres, on the extreme left of the Allied line, renewed again and again in the winter of 1914-15 and the spring that followed, and made more formidable by their use of poison gas, were beaten off by the remnants of the old regular army, reinforced by hastily trained Territorials and Dominion troops. At the beginning of 1916 they began a furious attack on Verdun, which they continued till late in the summer, in the hope either of capturing a pivot in the French defence system, or of forcing France to use up her finest troops in its defence.

Not till the autumn of 1915 were the New Armies, recruited by Lord Kitchener since the beginning of the war, judged ready to take the field. At Loos in September, 1915, on the Somme all through the later summer and autumn of 1916, and in front of Arras in the spring of 1917, the British artillery and infantry attempted to tear a gap in the enemy's line through which the cavalry could pour. Again and again the gap was made, at a tremendous cost in human life—it was calculated that the British lost 400,000 in killed and wounded, and the French half that number, in the long-drawn-out Battle of the Somme—again and again it was closed. Worse was to follow. The great French offensive in Champagne in the early summer of 1917 failed miserably; the losses were so frightful that the troops mutinied, and it seemed for a time as if France would withdraw from the struggle. In the autumn of the same year a British offensive on an even larger scale, made at an even greater cost in human life, came to a standstill among the marshes in front of Ypres. The very weapons used by the British seemed to turn against them: the newly invented tanks, used sparingly at the Battle of the Somme, stuck fast here, for in the prolonged preliminary bombardment the heavy guns had turned the whole battle area into a vast sea of mud.

The first plan of the German general staff, as we saw,

was to be content with holding the Russians off while they brought the main weight of their forces to bear on the French. As soon as they saw, however, that their armies of invasion had been halted on the Marne, as soon as they learned that the Russians were pouring into East Prussia and Galicia, they made a complete reversal of their plan of campaign. Their plan was now to remain on the defensive in the west and transfer the bulk of their troops to the east, to deliver a knock-out blow at the Russians. The veteran Hindenburg defeated the Russians at Tannenberg in the autumn of 1914, and drove them over the German frontier. Bitter fighting went on all through 1915, 1916, and 1917, but though the ill-equipped Russians resisted stubbornly, they were forced farther and farther away from the frontiers of Germany and Austria.

Russian
Defeats,
1914-17.

It was to put Turkey out of the war, and at the same time to strengthen Russia, by establishing communication with her by way of the Dardanelles and the Black Sea, that in the spring of 1915 a British fleet tried to force the passage of the Dardanelles. It withdrew when two battleships were blown up by mines. The attempt was renewed, this time by British, and Australian and New Zealand troops—the famous Anzacs¹—who succeeded in climbing up the rocky slopes from the bullet- and shell-swept beaches, and establishing themselves on the tip of the Gallipoli peninsula. Though the enemy could not dislodge them, they failed to make any progress, and in December had to be withdrawn.

Gallipoli,
1915.

Then, in the latter part of 1915, Serbia, which had proved more than a match for Austria, was overwhelmed by the combined attacks of Germany, Austria, and Bulgaria. There was now a clear road from Germany to the Balkans, the Near East, and Arabia, and this was a serious

The War
in the
Balkans
and the
Near East.

¹ ANZAC = Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.

menace to India. The British had begun a campaign in Mesopotamia in 1915, so as to secure the Persian oil-fields and to prevent the Germans from finishing the Berlin-Baghdad railway. The British advanced on Baghdad but had to retreat, and in April, 1916, a large body of troops which had been surrounded in Kut was forced to surrender. Fortunately the Russians, who were fighting in the Caucasus, defeated the Turks at Sarikamish and captured the great fort of Erzerum. The Mesopotamia campaign dragged on, and early in 1917 Maude captured Baghdad and drove the Turks northwards, while later in the year Allenby made a brilliant offensive in Palestine and took Jerusalem. This campaign in Palestine was the result of Turkish efforts against Egypt. Allenby followed up his successes in 1918, and received great help from the Arabs in the Hedjaz.

The War at Sea. All through the war the British navy kept incessant watch and ward. In the later months of 1914 the seas were cleared of German ships; in December, off the Falkland Islands, Admiral Sturdee sank von Spee's Pacific squadron, which had destroyed Admiral Cradock's little fleet off Coronel five weeks before.

Coronel and the Falklands, 1914. The navy now settled down to guard our coasts, to protect our commerce, to transport and convoy troops and munitions, and to wait and watch for the emergence of the German fleet. It was not till May, 1916, that the German High Sea Fleet put to sea and met the British Grand Fleet at Jutland. The encounter was not the second Trafalgar that had been expected. The German battleships, with their heavier armour and more effective system of fire control, inflicted much more damage than they received—the German losses were only half those of the British—but it was a decisive battle none the less: the German fleet had received punishment enough to make it stay in harbour till the war was over.

Battle of Jutland, 1916.

After Jutland, however, German submarines became a much more serious menace to both British and neutral shipping than they had been before. The Germans, knowing that Britain was dependent on supplies of imported foodstuffs, tried to bring about the collapse of the Allies by starving Britain into submission. This was to be done by sinking without warning not only all British ships, or all neutral ships making for a British port, but any ship of any country anywhere.

Submarine Warfare.

This policy of indiscriminate submarine sinkings was really penny wise and pound foolish. So far both the people and the President of the United States of America had tried to keep out of the war. The drowning of more than a hundred Americans in the sinking of the *Lusitania* in May, 1915, though it roused their indignation, did not make them change their minds, for the *Lusitania*, after all, was a British, not an American liner. But now German submarines were beginning to sink American ships. President Wilson took up the challenge, and on 6th April, 1917, with the full consent of Congress, declared war. But as the American regular army numbered only 100,000 men, many months would have to elapse before an army comparable in size with the other Allied armies could be recruited, trained, equipped, and sent to Europe. Her mighty fleet was at once sent across the Atlantic. The help which it gave, and the activities of the "Q ships", or mystery ships, soon resulted in the submarines being mastered, and by the end of 1917 it was clear that the submarine blockade had failed. But the submarine menace had not ended: the seas had to be kept clear for the liners and transports bringing the American troops to the battlefields of France, so the navy made continuous efforts to combat it right to the end of the war. On St. George's Day, 1918, for example, an exceedingly daring raid by a small landing party was carried out at Zee-

America enters the War, 1917.

brugge, one of the most important submarine bases.

**Russia
withdraws
from the
War, 1917.** In spite of the entry of the United States into the war, the skies were darkening as 1917 drew to a close. In October a combined German and Austro-Hungarian army attacked the Italians at Caporetto, drove them beyond the River Piave, and inflicted on them a defeat from which it seemed there would be no recovery. British and French troops had to be rushed south from the already depleted battle-fronts of France and Flanders to hold the enemy in check. To make things worse, Russia, in the throes of a revolution, had withdrawn from the war, and before the end of the year had concluded an armistice with Germany. Large numbers of German troops could now be transferred from the eastern to the western front, just at the time when the British and French armies, already seriously weakened by their costly offensives, had been still further reduced by the sending of several divisions to Italy, and when the new American armies were still on the other side of the Atlantic. The Germans therefore determined to stake all on a grand offensive, which would smash through the Allied lines, cut off the British from the French, roll them up, and drive them into the sea.

**German
offensive
in the
West, 1918.** The plan very nearly succeeded. On 21st March, 1918, the Germans, under cover of a terrific artillery bombardment, which obliterated the British defences and silenced the British guns, swept the Fifth Army before them, right out of the ground painfully won in 1916 and 1917, back almost to Amiens, the focal point of the Allied system of communications. At other parts of the British line, the armies staggered before the German hammer blows, then recovered and stood firm. So serious was the position that the British Commander-in-Chief, Sir Douglas Haig, reminded his troops that they were fighting with their backs to the wall, and, to secure more effective team-

work, consented to serve under the great French General, Foch, who thus became the supreme commander of all the Allied troops on the Western Front, British and American as well as French. Reinforcements were rushed from Britain; the British fought back grimly; the German advance slowed down, and finally stopped.

One final attempt the Germans made, this time on the French front. At the end of May the German guns again thundered out; again the trenches and their defenders were obliterated by an avalanche of flame and steel; again the German infantry drove forward, till they were almost within sight of Paris; again, just when complete victory seemed within their grasp, they slowed down and stopped.

Foch was ready for them. He launched a counter-attack against them. Using tanks this time not in half-dozens but in hundreds, he drove them back from the ground that they had recently won, making 30,000 of them prisoners in one day. The enemy was allowed no rest. When the French halted in the centre, the British surged forward on the left to capture positions hitherto deemed impregnable; when the British paused, the great new American armies on the Allied right advanced to the attack. Back, and ever back, the enemy were driven, till at the beginning of November they were at some points on the German frontier once more. It was not only the German soldier who was now completely discouraged: the German sailors mutinied when the High Sea Fleet was ordered to put to sea and fight one last desperate battle. There was nothing for the German leaders to do but acknowledge defeat by asking for an armistice. The German Emperor abdicated and took refuge in neutral Holland. On 11th November, 1918, the Armistice was signed.

Allied
Counter-
offensive.

Germany was beaten. Her allies had already fallen.

Germany
defeated.

Allenby's campaign in Palestine had brought the Turks to their knees; Bulgaria, which had opposed a combined army of British, French and Serbs on the Salonika front surrendered unconditionally in September, and the Austrians had been completely routed by the Italians at the beginning of November. And now, on the 11th of November, 1918, the people of Britain went mad with delight. The war was ended—all wars were ended, they thought. In every town the bells rang out over laughing, cheering crowds, but while they rang a joy peal for victory they were also tolling for the million young men of British blood who had died to achieve that victory and end that war.

CHAPTER 41

“THE LONG WEEK-END”—I

Coalition
Government,
1915-22.

In the darkest hours between 1914 and 1918 Lloyd George had encouraged his countrymen by assuring them that “this was a war to end war” and that the fighting-man would come back to a land “fit for heroes to live in”. He had good ground for his hopes. The outbreak of war had at once put an end to all political strife: the suffragettes, who had tried to badger the members of the government into granting votes for women, suddenly abandoned their disturbances and demonstrations; the Opposition ceased to oppose, and in 1915 a Coalition government was formed, and Conservative and Labour ministers admitted to the Cabinet over which Asquith still presided as Prime Minister. But many of his new allies and some of his former followers thought that Asquith was too deliberate, too much

lacking in vigour and resource, to direct the energies of a country that was fighting for its existence. They were relieved when, in 1916, they saw him resign, and reassured when they saw Lloyd George, who had been a most successful Minister of Munitions, step into his place. The deposition of Asquith, the sudden elevation of his lieutenant, split the Liberal party into two equal and irreconcilable factions, and so hastened its decline and ultimate disappearance.

In 1918, Parliament, in recognition of the part that women were playing in the war—thousands of them undertaking work that hitherto had been done only by men—granted the vote to women over thirty on the terms on which it was granted to men.

First Instalment of
Votes for
Women,
1918.

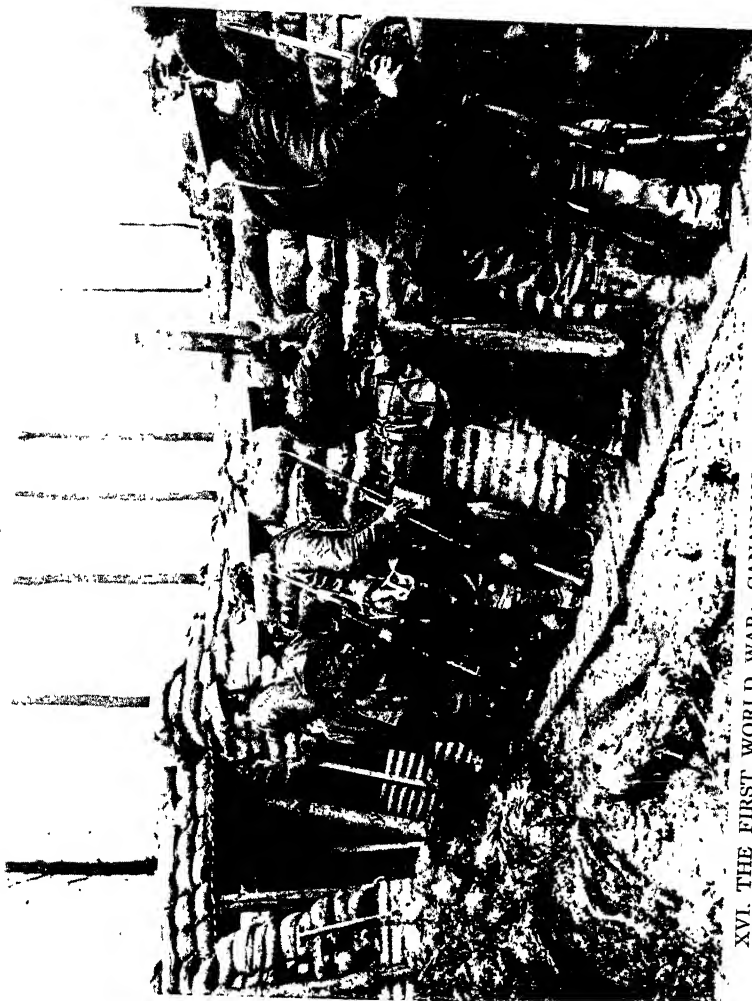
During a grave national emergency Parliament considered itself justified in prolonging its own life, so when the war came to an end in 1918, it had sat for eight years instead of five. Lloyd George decided therefore on an immediate dissolution, and had his reward—a grateful electorate returned him to power with an enormous majority over the Liberal and Labour dissidents who now formed the Opposition. It seemed that the successful war minister, secure in the support of the great majority of the Commons, might become the fervent and fearless social reformer once more.

He fully meant to, but his position as the Liberal leader of a Coalition that was mainly Conservative was much weaker than it seemed. His Conservative allies argued that his plans could not be carried out without spending more money, which would mean heavier taxation of a land already impoverished by four years of war. Nor could he hope that the nation would escape altogether the inevitable consequences of a long war—famine and pestilence. Though the famine that slew millions in Eastern Europe spared our island, in the winter of 1918–19

pestilence in the shape of a deadly influenza epidemic struck down tens of thousands of civilians and of soldiers whom shell and bullet had spared. And a starving and poverty-stricken Europe could not afford to buy our goods, so that after a brief boom in the two years immediately after the war, our trade began to decline, and the number of unemployed to grow.

Trouble in Ireland. In addition, the Coalition government had inherited from its Liberal predecessor the apparently insoluble Irish problem. The decision of the government, on the outbreak of war in 1914, to postpone the coming into operation of the Home Rule Act, made many Irishmen suspect that it had never meant them to get Home Rule at all, and induced them to join the Sinn Fein movement, which had for its object, not Home Rule within the British Empire, but the establishment by force of a completely independent republic. In 1916 a rebellion broke out in Dublin, but it was swiftly and sternly suppressed. Three years later it flared up again, this time all over Southern Ireland. The Home Rule Act of 1920, which separated six Ulster counties—now known as Northern Ireland—from the rest of Ireland, and authorized the setting up of separate Parliaments in Belfast and Dublin, failed to placate the Southern Irish. At length, in 1921, the British Government opened negotiations with the rebel leaders, and a treaty was signed which conferred dominion status on Southern Ireland, now to be known as the Irish Free State. Northern Ireland kept her own parliament and cabinet, but continued to send members to the Parliament at Westminster. So since 1922, when **Partition, 1922.** Parliament confirmed the Treaty, the United Kingdom has been the United Kingdom of Great Britain and *Northern* Ireland.

In the same year the Coalition broke up. Lloyd George, aware that he could no longer count on the support of



XVI. THE FIRST WORLD WAR: CANADIAN SOLDIERS IN THE FRONT LINE
(See Note on p. xvii)

his Conservative allies, resigned, along with the Liberal and Labour members of the Cabinet, and was replaced as Prime Minister by Bonar Law, a Scots-Canadian, at the head of a purely Conservative government. One former Liberal did indeed join him; this was no less a person than Winston Churchill. When Bonar Law died suddenly in 1923 the King sent, not for Lord Curzon, the leader of the Conservative party in the House of Lords, and the most distinguished of the elder Conservative statesmen, but for Mr. Baldwin, a comparative newcomer to politics. He thus definitely established the principle that the Prime Minister should always be a member of the House of Commons.

Unemployment had spread steadily, and many of Baldwin's supporters urged him to protect home industries by imposing taxes on imported goods. Baldwin, however, was unwilling to abandon free trade till he was convinced that the country as a whole approved of the change. In 1924, therefore, he put the question to the test of a General Election. The result settled only one thing—that as yet the opponents of Protection were in a majority. It decided nothing else, for though the numbers of both Liberal and Labour members had increased greatly, the Conservatives still formed the largest single party in the House, without a clear majority, however, over the two other parties combined. The Conservatives took office, only to be defeated by the united Liberal and Labour vote. Labour, as the second largest party in the Commons, had its turn next. A Labour government was formed under Ramsay Macdonald, but since it did not command the support of the majority of the members in the Commons, it could not attempt any far-reaching social change, and it was soon defeated by a combined Conservative and Liberal vote. Asquith thought that his turn had come. He was disappointed.

Return to
Party
Govern-
ment.

First
Labour
Govern-
ment,
1924.

Ramsay Macdonald asked the king to dissolve Parliament, and in the General Election that followed the Conservatives had an overwhelming majority.

The sun of Liberalism seemed to have set. Some of the elder Liberal statesmen went off to right or left, to become Conservative, like Winston Churchill, or Labour, like Lord Haldane, who was Liberal Minister for War in 1914, and Labour Lord Chancellor in 1924. Younger men of talent, anxious to serve their country, or eager for political fame, hesitated to join a party which, it seemed, would never again be in power.

But many of the electors who put the Conservatives into power soon repented of their action. Ever since the end of the war there had been trouble in the mining industry. The mine-owners maintained that the industry was not paying its way, and that it would be ruined unless the miners consented to work longer, or accept lower wages, or, better still, do both. The miners maintained, and a Royal Commission had agreed, that their hours were already too long and their wages too small, and that what was needed was really nationalization—complete government control of the mines. A lengthy strike in 1919 ended in a patched-up settlement which satisfied neither party. In 1926 the miners again came out on strike. Parliament showed no sign of giving them what they wanted. It was most unlikely, indeed, that it should, since the Labour party, the only party that supported nationalization of the mining industry, was in a decided minority in the House.

The miners, seeing no hope of getting anything from Parliament, resolved to resort to "direct action". They persuaded the Trades Union Council to call a General Strike. Instructions were issued, and obeyed. All over the island railwaymen, transport workers, and printers came out on strike. At first there were no trains, no buses, no newspapers. But the Labour leaders soon

saw that they had blundered. They had wanted to draw the attention of Parliament and the general public to the miners' grievances; they had succeeded instead in rousing the indignation of both—of Parliament, because it considered that its authority had been challenged; of the public, because of the manifold discomforts and inconveniences inflicted by the strike. The strikers, too, had forgotten that as long as there were tens of thousands of private motor cars in the country, they could not bring transport to an absolute standstill. Even a skeleton bus and tram service was soon restored with the help of volunteer drivers. At the end of a week everyone—except the miners, who remained on strike for another six months—was back at work. But Parliament could not forgive or forget; it passed an act which limited the right to strike, and declared general strikes illegal.

The working man had learned his lesson—to look for redress of grievances by discussion in Parliament, not by direct action outside it.

In 1928 the Franchise Act, which granted the vote to all women over twenty-one on the terms on which it was already granted to men, added some millions of voters to the electorate. The General Election which followed in 1929 made Labour for the first time the largest party in the House of Commons.

Franchise
Act, 1928.

Labour's accession to power almost coincided with the great trade slump in the United States of America. Its effects were soon felt here. No one could or would buy from us; prices fell; factories, steelworks, and shipyards closed; the number of unemployed was no longer in hundreds of thousands, but in millions. The Labour government was helpless; all it could do was relax the restrictions on the payment of unemployment benefit and extend the period over which it could be paid. But this meant the paying out of sums far greater than had been

Unem-
ployment.

provided for under the Insurance Scheme, and the threat of national bankruptcy. The Conservatives and many of the Liberals grew alarmed; their anxiety was shared by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Snowden, and by Ramsay Macdonald, who in 1931 formed a National Government—a Coalition pledged to practise the most rigid economy. But almost all the Labour members refused to join. Half the Liberal remnant followed their example; half supported the National Government.

The General Election which followed confirmed the verdict of Parliament—the members of the National government outnumbered their opponents in the Commons by more than five to one. But in spite of its Labour Prime Minister the new government was to all intents and purposes a Conservative government. In 1932, by imposing a general tariff on foreign imports, it definitely repudiated the century-old policy of Free Trade.

From 1932 onwards there was a steady decrease in unemployment and a slow return to prosperity. But the regions that had been most prosperous in Victorian times—the centres of the coal and iron industry in Wales, in northern England, in central Scotland, the cotton towns of Lancashire, the woollen towns of Yorkshire—took a long time to make even a partial recovery. Industry, which had drifted north, was drifting back to the south, to Greater London and the Thames valley. But there was a difference—industry in the south meant the new light industries, like the making of motor cars and electrical appliances, not the old heavy industries like mining and shipbuilding. At last the heavy industries began to revive, too. Shipyards that had been closed down were reopened; blast-furnaces again lit up the midnight sky. But, as we shall see, it was an ominous revival.

The enthusiasm which in 1935 marked the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of George V was inspired mainly

by affection for an unpretentious, duty-doing, and duty-loving monarch, but partly by the belief that the long lane had had a turning at last, that the shadow of unemployment, which had grown fainter, would soon completely disappear. The policy of the National government, it seemed, had been justified by events. In the General Election, later in the year, it was returned with a majority of 247. But it could no longer be called a Coalition government. Almost all its Labour ministers had disappeared; the Prime Minister himself had resigned before the election, to make way for Stanley Baldwin. Baldwin retired two years later in favour of Neville Chamberlain, and went to the Upper House as Earl Baldwin of Bewdley.

In the interim he had guided the country through a grave constitutional crisis. King George V died in January, 1936, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Edward VIII, who had gained great popularity as Prince of Wales. After he had been ten months on the throne he announced his intention of marrying an American lady, who had already divorced two husbands, a marriage to which neither the British nor any Dominion government could agree. Once more King and Parliament were in conflict, and once more the King had to yield. He abdicated in favour of his younger brother, the Duke of York, who took the title of George VI, and—no longer King, but Duke of Windsor—he went into exile.

Abdication
of Edward
VIII.

CHAPTER 42

"THE LONG WEEK-END"—II. OUTBREAK
OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

In the year following Edward's abdication, another shadow, darker and more menacing than that of unemployment, began to spread over the country. It did not come from within the Empire, though there, too, disappointments were encountered. As long as Mr. Cosgrave was President it seemed as if the new Irish Free State would be content to assume the responsibilities, as well as the privileges, of a British dominion. But at a General Election in 1932 Eamon de Valera's party secured a majority, and he became President. He refused to pay certain money owing to Britain, and a state of economic warfare resulted. The relationships between the two countries were still further strained in 1937, when De Valera gave Eire—as the Free State was now called—a new constitution which completely severed all political ties with Great Britain, and practically renounced allegiance to the Crown. How complete that separation was appeared in 1939, when the government of Eire decided to remain neutral in the war with Germany, and, contrary to the Treaty of 1921, denied the use of its ports to the British fleet. This decision, however, did not hinder tens of thousands of young Irishmen from crossing to Great Britain, to work in her munition factories or fight in her armed forces.

The future of India was also a matter of grave concern. In 1917 the British Government announced that its policy was to give Indians a large and increasing share in the administration of the country, while keeping certain

Ireland
moves
towards
Separation.

Indian
problems.

important matters, like defence, under its own control for a time. The first step was taken when the Government of India Act was passed in 1919. A strong Nationalist party, however, under the saintly and subtle Mahatma Gandhi, persisted in demanding immediate self-government, and made the Act unworkable. As a result of a Report made in 1930 by a Commission of which Sir John Simon was chairman, it was decided that the solution of the Indian problem lay in the establishment of a federation of all Indian provinces and states, with a Parliament for the whole of India from which the British would be excluded, as they would also be from the assemblies of the various provinces. These proposals were embodied in the India Act of 1935, but the fact that certain powers were still reserved for the Viceroy and his Council, which contained British as well as Indian officials, failed to secure the approval of the Nationalist leaders.

A solution of the problem was rendered more difficult by the fact that the four hundred million inhabitants of India are not all of one race or one religion. The Moslems, for example, fearing that self-government for India might mean the domination of the Moslem minority by the Hindu majority, began to demand a separate Moslem state (Pakistan) for those provinces in which most of the inhabitants were Mohammedans.

The British occupation of Egypt, which Gladstone had meant to be purely a temporary one, lasted for more than half a century. But though the British Government in 1914 declared Egypt to be a protectorate, it had no desire to force the Egyptians into the Empire if they wanted to stay out, and in 1922 it declared that Egypt was an independent kingdom. British forces were kept in Egypt, however, for the defence of the Suez Canal. In 1936 an Anglo-Egyptian Treaty was signed which provided for the gradual withdrawal of these forces.

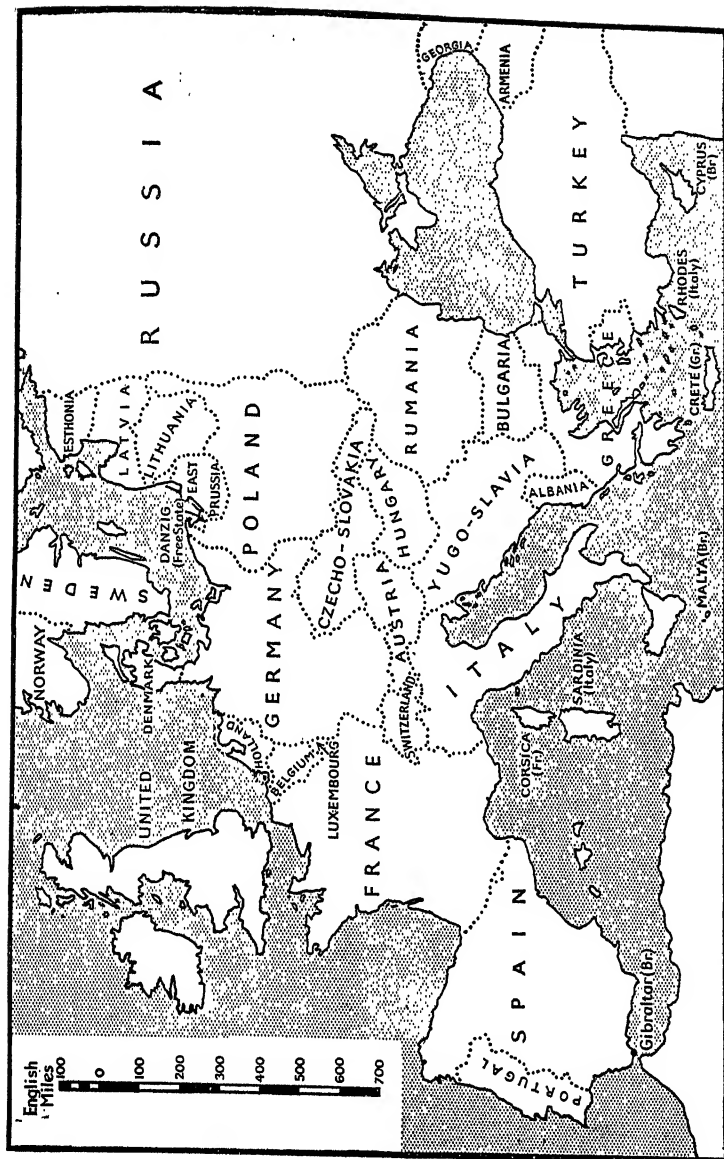
The Sudan, however, remained as before, half in and half out of the Empire—a Condominium, ruled over by both Britain and Egypt.

Egypt was never a British colony in the ordinary sense. In the twenty-one years between the two wars neither the Dominions nor the Colonies showed any desire to break away from the Empire. At the same time the Dominions made it quite clear that they were no longer to be regarded as British possessions, but rather as independent states joined in a permanent alliance with Great Britain. The Imperial Conference of 1926 declared that Britain and the Dominions were self-governing communities within the British Empire, equal in status, united by a common allegiance to the Crown, and this declaration was ratified by Parliament in the Statute of Westminster, passed in 1931. This statute seemed to be a portent, a warning that the bond that united the Dominions to the Mother Country was growing so thin as to be invisible; eight years later the stern test of war showed it to be stronger than ever.

It was thought that war had been banished from the world in 1919, when the representatives of Britain and her allies assembled at Versailles to make a peace that would be just and lasting. The Treaty of Versailles with Germany was the most important of a number of treaties which completely altered the map of Europe. Old states were broken up, and new ones formed by grouping together people of the same race, language, and traditions. The old kingdom of Poland, divided into three by Russia, Austria, and Prussia at the end of the eighteenth century, was put together again as the Republic of Poland. Bohemia, lost by the Elector Palatine to Austria three hundred years before, was joined to other Austrian provinces with mainly Slav inhabitants to form the Republic of Czechoslovakia; Serbia, augmented by Montenegro

Statute of
Westminster,
1931.

The
Treaty of
Versailles,
1919.



EUROPE IN 1920

and the Austrian provinces inhabited by southern Slavs, became the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Germany surrendered all her colonies, and her navy, cut down her army to 100,000 men, and submitted to the occupation of the Rhineland by allied troops.

The League of Nations. In the Treaty of Versailles was embodied the Covenant of the League of Nations, which aimed at establishing a world alliance of nations, pledged never to resort to war against one another. This "United States of the World" had a parliament—the Assembly—which met once a year at Geneva, and a Cabinet—the League Council—which met whenever anything happened that might endanger peace. Disputes, the founders of the League knew, would still arise, but they would no longer do any harm, since they would be settled amicably and expeditiously by the Council or the Assembly. If a state refused to abide by the Covenant, it could still be made to see reason by the application of economic sanctions—the cutting off of supplies by the other members of the League. If it still persisted in defying the League, then it would be assailed and crushed by the united forces of all the League members.

Weakness of the League. Unfortunately the League never became a world alliance: it was handicapped from the start by the refusal of the United States and Russia to have anything to do with it. Germany was admitted in 1926 and Russia in 1934, but the United States never joined. And though in the earlier years of its existence the League was successful in settling disputes among small nations, it failed signally when called on to deal with a breach of the Covenant by a great power. In 1931 the Japanese made an unprovoked attack on Manchuria; the League reprimanded Japan, but did nothing to stop her, did not even apply economic sanctions. Japan completed the conquest of Manchuria, and left the League.

Japan was far away, but another state, dangerously near our shores, was quick to learn the lesson that the League could be defied with impunity. Already Germany had obtained relief from the hardest terms in the Versailles Treaty: the armies of occupation had been withdrawn; and the attempt to get reparation payments had been abandoned. It was hoped that these concessions, along with the admission of Germany to the League as the equal of the other great powers, would reconcile her permanently to her former enemies, and make her renounce for ever her dream of dominating Europe by force of arms. But many Germans still dreamt that dream, a dream which the fanatical Adolf Hitler assured them would soon come true. They joined Hitler's National Socialist, or Nazi, party. In 1933 the Nazis had overwhelmed the other political parties in Germany, and terrified them into silence and impotence. Hitler became Chancellor and unquestioned master of Germany. Under his guidance Germany broke away from the League of Nations and began to arm secretly. He knew that he was running a risk, for if Germany prepared openly for a new war, she might be overwhelmed by the collective forces of the nations supporting the League. In 1935 the Italians invaded Abyssinia, a country which, as a member of the League, Italy was bound to protect. The League protested, but did nothing, and Abyssinia was conquered and occupied.

Hitler
gains
Control of
Germany.

Hitler was quick to learn the lesson that none of the states that formed the League would go to war unless its security or its own interests were directly threatened. He accordingly let it be known that he was building up a big army, and in 1936 marched his troops into the Rhineland, which by the Treaty of Versailles they were forbidden to enter. By this move he gained military control of the highly industrialized Ruhr Basin, from which he could

draw almost inexhaustible supplies of munitions of war. Early in 1938, as his new tanks and guns rolled across the **Austria annexed by Germany.** Austrian frontier, he declared Austria united to Germany. As before, the League protested, but did nothing; after all, it hesitated to plunge the world into war to prevent the union of two Germanic states, even if that union had been effected by somewhat high-handed methods.

So far Hitler could protest, with some show of reason, that his purpose was not to dominate Europe, but to bring within his Reich or Empire those regions of Europe whose inhabitants were members of the German race. He used the same argument a little later when he demanded that those parts of Czechoslovakia which were inhabited by people of German descent—the Sudeten Germans—should be severed from the Republic and incorporated in the Reich. But now all except the most credulous of British statesmen began to question his motives, for the regions in which the Sudeten Germans were in a majority included the whole of the heavily fortified mountain frontier of Czechoslovakia, the surrender of which would leave the heart of the country open to attack. The Czechs therefore prepared to resist, secure in the knowledge that they had a defensive alliance with France, and that Russia had promised to come to their aid should France do the same.

British Appease-ment Policy. To the British statesmen and people it seemed that they were back again in August, 1914; that they were again being dragged into a war which they did not want, and for which they were unprepared, over a frontier question that in no way affected either their security or their interests. Almost any sacrifice, they argued, was worth making, if only it averted war. And the government knew now that Hitler would go to war if he did not get what he wanted. The French Government, too, began

to hesitate. Hitler after all might mean what he said; he might ask for nothing more once the German-speaking districts of Czechoslovakia had been absorbed in the Reich. Even if he meant to go to war sooner or later a delay of a year would give Britain and France a last chance to build the munition factories, and to provide themselves with the aeroplanes, tanks, and heavy guns which they required if they were to challenge the might of a re-armed and confident Germany. So when, in September 1938, Hitler summoned the Prime Ministers of Britain and France to Munich, they consented to the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia.

Munich,
1938.

"I bring you peace with honour," said Neville Chamberlain on his return, echoing the proud words that Disraeli had used sixty years before. It was no occasion for pride: by the Munich Agreement Britain and France abandoned a friendly democratic state to the tender mercies of Nazi Germany, for the Russian Government protested that without the co-operation of France, it could do nothing to help Czechoslovakia. And Czechoslovakia was soon beyond help. In March, 1939, Hitler annexed the whole of it to his empire. It was now evident that he had no intention whatever of stopping once he had made the racial and political boundaries of Germany coincide. His real aim was to strike down first one European nation, then another, till he had brought the whole of Europe, and all the dominions and colonies of the other European nations, under his sway. And then?

Czecho-
slovakia
annexed by
Germany,
1939

Poland was marked down as his next victim. A few days later he demanded the incorporation of the "free" city of Danzig in the Reich, and the concession of a road and rail route, to be under complete German control, across the wedge of Polish territory which separated East Prussia from the rest of Germany. The Poles saw what lay behind this apparently modest and reasonable request,

Poland
threatened
by Ger-
many.

and refused to yield an inch of their territory. The British and French Governments understood too, and straightway declared that they would defend Poland if she were attacked.

Hitler paused, but there was now no pause in the preparations for war in Germany and in Britain. The British Government had at last become thoroughly alarmed; in the summer of 1939 it departed from an age-old national tradition, and introduced compulsory military service in time of peace. Only a miracle, it seemed, could now turn Hitler and the "crazed and driven" German people from an adventure which might extinguish European civilization as completely as it had been extinguished in the Dark Ages. Only if Russia could be persuaded to join France and Britain in daring Hitler to advance a step farther could peace be assured. The British Government accordingly opened negotiations with Russia for a military alliance, negotiations which dragged on all through the summer of 1939. But the British envoys could neither overcome the Russian distrust of their motives, nor outbid the German diplomats, who promised the Russians that if they refrained from siding with Britain and France they could have Eastern Poland and the three Baltic republics—Latvia, Esthonia, and Lithuania—as their reward. Russia swallowed the bait; on 23rd August a Russo-German Pact was proclaimed.

Nothing could now halt Germany. On 1st September the German bombers roared over the frontier of Poland, to scatter its proud armies and pound its cities into rubble.

"Once more we hear the word
That sickened earth of old:
'No law except the sword
Unsheathed and uncontrolled'."

The British Government and people heard the word, and answered the challenge. Two days later, on 3rd September, 1939, Britain and Germany were at war. All over the island that night the lights in streets and houses were darkened, not to shine out again till six years had passed.

Beginning
of Second
World
War, 1939.

In all our "strange eventful history" there is nothing like the story of these six years—a story of heart-breaking disaster, of treachery, of vain sacrifice, of endurance, of high endeavour, of hard-won victory. But the time to tell it has not yet come.

LIST OF IMPORTANT DATES

The numbers in parentheses indicate the pages of the text dealing with the events recorded in the List. The abbreviation *ca.* (*circa*, about) has been put before the approximate date of certain events, the exact date of which cannot now be ascertained. From the middle of the eleventh century the names of the Kings of England are printed in heavy type, and the names of the Kings of Scots in italics.

B.C.

55. First Expedition of Julius Cæsar to Britain (p. 1).
 54. Second Expedition of Julius Cæsar to Britain (p. 1).

A.D.

43. Roman Occupation of Britain begins (p. 2).
 122. Hadrian's Wall built from Solway to Tyne (p. 2).
 142. Antonine Wall built from Forth to Clyde (p. 2).
 183. Antonine Wall abandoned by Romans (p. 2).
 410. Roman garrisons withdrawn from Britain (p. 2).
 432. St. Patrick's mission to Ireland (p. 8).
 449. English invasion of South Britain begins (p. 4).
ca. 500. Battle of Mount Badon: Britons hold up English advance (p. 4).
 563. St. Columba's mission to Scotland (pp. 8, 44).
 577. Battle of Deorham: English reach Severn (p. 5).
 597. Mission of St. Augustine: Reconversion of England begins (p. 8).
 613. Battle of Chester: English reach Irish Sea (p. 5).
 664. The Synod of Whitby (p. 9).
 685. Battle of Nechtansmere (p. 44).
 787. Danish inroads begin (p. 13).
 829. King Egbert of Wessex becomes overlord of whole of England (p. 12).
 843. Union of kingdoms of Picts and Scots (p. 44).

- 871-899. King Alfred the Great (pp. 13, 15, 16).
 ca. 878. Alfred makes treaty with Danes; Danelaw established (p. 15).
 945. King Edmund places Strathclyde under protection of Scottish King, Malcolm I (p. 46).
 973. King Edgar transfers Lothian to Scottish King, Kenneth II, who does homage for it (p. 46).
 1002. Massacre of Danes on St. Brice's Day by order of Æthelred Unraed (p. 18).
 1016-35. Cnut, King of Denmark, rules over England (p. 19).
 1018. Battle of Carham: present land frontiers of Scotland established (p. 46).
 1040-57. *Macbeth* (p. 47).
 1042-66. **Edward** (the Confessor); restoration of ancient English line of kings (p. 19).
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 ca. 1070. Marriage of Malcolm III and Princess Margaret (p. 47).
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 1097-1107. *Edgar* (p. 47).
 1100-35. **Henry I** (Beauclerk) (p. 28).
 1107-24. *Alexander I*.
 1124-53. *David I* (pp. 48, 49).
 1135-54. **Stephen** and **Matilda** rival sovereigns: civil war in England (pp. 30, 31).
 1138. David I intervenes, is defeated at Battle of the Standard, but gains three northern counties (pp. 48, 49).
 1153-65. *Malcolm IV* (the Maiden) (p. 49).
 1154-89. **Henry II** (pp. 31-35).
 1157. Henry II makes Malcolm IV restore three northern counties and do homage (p. 49).
 1164. The Constitutions of Clarendon, and quarrel of Henry II and Thomas Becket (pp. 32, 33).
 1165-1214. *William* (the Lion) (pp. 36, 49).
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1171. Henry's supremacy acknowledged by the Irish chiefs (p. 36).
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- 1189-99. **Richard I** (Lion Heart) (pp. 36-38).
1189. Richard restores independence to Scotland (p. 36).
- 1189-92. The Third Crusade (pp. 36, 37).
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- 1199-1216. **John** (Lackland) (pp. 38-40).
1204. Loss of Normandy (p. 38).
- 1214-49. *Alexander II* (p. 51).
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- 1249-86. *Alexander III* (p. 51).
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- 1292-96. *John* (Balliol) (pp. 53, 54).
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1298. Edward defeats Wallace at Falkirk (p. 55).
1305. Execution of Wallace (p. 55).
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1306. Renewal of Scottish War of Independence (p. 56).
- 1307-27. **Edward II** (pp. 57-59).
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1328. Treaty of Northampton—recognition of Scottish independence (p. 59).
- 1329-71. *David II* (Bruce) (pp. 93, 94).
1332. Renewal of war with Scotland; Scots defeated at Dupplin (p. 93).

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- 1347-50. The Black Death (p. 67).
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- 1422-61. **Henry VI** (pp. 76, 79, 83).
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1455. Wars of the Roses begin: First Battle of St. Albans (p. 79).
- 1460-88. *James III* (Stewart) (p. 97).
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- 1483-85. **Richard III** (p. 82).
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1539. Dissolution of greater monasteries (pp. 87, 88).
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